THE WORSHIPING CONGREGATION

THE REV. LUCIUS C. CLARK, D. D.

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THE WORSHIPING CONGREGATION

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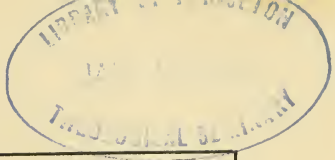

THE WORSHIPING CONGREGATION

By

THE REV. LUCIUS C. CLARK, D. D.

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Dedicated

TO THE DEVOUT WORSHIPERS IN THE
CHURCHES OF EVERY NAME.

PREFACE

THE writer has looked with some diligence for a book that would attempt an answer to some of the practical inquiries which arise from our common Church worship. The Protestant minister will find but little help in his attempt to become effective in the service of worship other than that which has to do with the sermon. Books on pastoral theology have not attempted our task, for they have largely to do with the minister as a preacher. To either supply the deficiency, or make it more apparent, we have undertaken a consideration of some of the topics hitherto neglected. There are items of worship that have to do with the effectiveness of our Church life and are recognized as vital to it, and yet these things have been mentioned in some notable books as the "Humble details of the pastoral method." Careful search in the libraries

of several theological schools makes it the more apparent that these "humble details" are largely ignored.

The pastoral method, from the viewpoint of the congregation, has received but scant recognition. Nearly all that has to do with our worship is considered from the viewpoint of the minister rather than that of the congregation. If we can put our attention to the topic of the minister as a worshiper, rather than the minister as a preacher, we will have accomplished part of our purpose. The greater aim is to bring a message for the general worshiper by a discussion of his worship. The fundamentals of worship have as much to do with, and are as dependent upon, the man in the pew as the man in the pulpit. The elements of weakness that have taken hold of our Christian life because they are tolerated in our worship should be reckoned with. Christian worship in every community of America is not at its best because we will not see that details of worth can not

be omitted and those items that work us ill are admitted.

If the scientist can make progress by sitting down and simply watching what and how nature is at work, so we can make progress in the kingdom of grace if we will sit watchfully for a time to see how grace works. No man introduces a new item into the world of nature, but rather appreciates what he finds already there, so we can not and have no desire that any new item shall be introduced into this kingdom of grace. As devout worshipers we would rather come to an appreciation of that we already have.

In the order and conduct of the most sacred work of public worship every man is left practically to be his own master. If there be virtue in trying the untried we have reason to hope for great gain, for every new and novel thing known to the ecclesiastical innovator has been tried out as an item of worship. The beauty of no man's theory can make up for the

divinely ordained elements that make for Christian progress.

If we can vitalize the details, so often treated as of little worth, by bringing them in contact with a living, worshiping congregation, our purpose will have been accomplished. We can claim little more for these pages than that they have in some way been connected with life. There is either an individual, a congregation, or a Church back of every question, or standing out trying to make some answer.

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WORSHIP AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

CHRISTIAN worship is an art. It is not only in the category to which the fine arts belong, but it is the very queen of art. The impressions of genius on canvas or marble may suggest priceless worth and imperishable fame—the worshiper, as a soul impressionist, has to do with unlimited being. It is an art that is priceless and as imperishable as the immortal.

To "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" is not the small task some indifferent Christians would make it. The "beauty of holiness" and an unthoughtful worship can never be harmonized. To boast ourselves of our informalities in the Churches is little more than taking pride in our incivilities. A meaning of Christian worship should be the pleasing and honoring of God rather than showing favor and conciliating men. Browning expresses the aspiration of a Christian in worship by saying for us, "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed

his grasp, or what's a Heaven for?" Man has always longed for an approach to God. Man's path in his ascent to God has never been quite plain, and often has he stumbled into the presence of his Maker. The Prophet Amos lets the indignation of his own nature interpret God's thought of certain worship the people were wont to give. "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt offerings and meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy viols." The temple worship was full of the majesty and mystery of worship, but quite unlike the Lord of the Temple. Jesus gave but few general principles in connection with worship. His message was not given to enlighten a committee on Church liturgy, but to a lone woman with an entirely mistaken idea of worship.

"The woman saith unto Him, Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and, Ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know: for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be His worshipers. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." It would have saved many questions had Jesus given a set program of worship. He has left "in spirit and truth" as the guide, and the details are to be determined by His followers. Indefiniteness of order is not to be attributed to any indifference of Jesus. The details of our religious life are left to the development

of those who have the spirit of the Master and seek to know His truth.

The Church largely stands before the world conceived as worship. It is the soul's language in aspiration. It is a divinely ordered, and experience tested, essential in maintaining the purity of the Christian religion. It is God's one universal appeal to the world. It is the life functions of the body of Christ—the Church. Ministers, members of the Churches, and the world-at-large have a struggle for a spiritual culture as if it were none of their business. In the midst of all this indifference is set the worship of God, which comes as a holy call to man. It is not only concerned with the soul culture of the professedly Christian man, but the acts of worship devoutly participated in have a strong influence on the unconverted. Worship should be conceived of as evangelistic as well as cultural. Thousands sing the praise of God with a worshiping congregation until, in a good time, they catch the meaning of

it all. Many will offer a prayer to God with a praying congregation that brings the fulfillment of the promise, "Thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." The greater portion of the wealth of Christian character in the Kingdom of God has come from the effects of the regular worshiping congregation. It would indicate a foolish minister and an unthinking congregation if they were not to think much and make the most of this divinely ordained means for the salvation of the world. Man does not seem to get on with his worship without some form or order. This will be either beautiful or ugly, dependent upon the intelligence and the Christian devotion of the worshiper.

In the relationship of worship to the Christian life it is necessary to acknowledge concerning them certain conditions which are apparent. The one or, at most, the two public services of worship are making the entire religious exercise for an increasingly large number of Chris-

tian people. Home worship, however much it may be lamented, is so generally neglected that the number of homes where a family altar is sustained is quite insignificant in proportion to the membership of the Churches. It would not be easy to disprove that one-half of the entire membership of the Churches of America are dependent upon one public service of worship for the week. Again, this service, which is under the mighty compulsion of ministering to the spiritual needs of the multitude of believers, is being constantly restricted as to time. The maximum limit of time would be placed at one hour and thirty minutes. The average minister is not expected to take of this time to exceed thirty minutes for the sermon. The remaining portion, if used in the best possible manner, is only given a small chance to accomplish the ends of worship. The time is only too short if we compel ourselves to reckon the service as beginning with the entrance of the first worshiper, and

only concluding on the closing of the doors of the temple as the caretaker leaves the place of worship. There is neither a moment to be lost nor an item of worship to be neglected during the interval above specified. The poets' pagan is not a greatly overdrawn sketch of many a worshiper to-day:

"An' I hallus comed to's choorch afoor my Sally wur dead,
An' 'eerd un a bummin' awaay loike a buzzard-clock ower my zead,
An' I niver knaw'd what a mean'd, but I thowt a'ad summit to saay,
An' I thowt a said what a owt to 'a said, an I comed awaay."

Tennyson's "Northern Farmer" may express an ignorant notion concerning worship, but it is no worse than an informed but persistent neglect. To many it is a parson's service, and when he has had his say they come away.

Our fear for the worship of the future is not so much that men will set themselves

the task to do evil to the faith by an insistence upon certain forms or ceremonies, as that we shall follow to our own hurt inventions of men that have not the sanction of truth or the Spirit of God. An important consideration for the Churches of America is whether in the future they can trust the empirical fancies of individuals, or even local Churches, for a helpful order of Christian worship. The development of both form and spirit in Church worship has too long been left with the indiscriminating and unprepared. Almost every kind of message, messenger, and manner has been introduced into our Churches, and success upon these has been pronounced, providing only that the means used have drawn a crowd and brought a collection. The question of our material age is not so much, Is it worship? but, Will it work? Musicales, impersonations, concerts, lectures, stereopticon exhibitions, popular sermons on topics of the hour, discussion of politics, and many other familiar fea-

tures are used on Sunday in the hour of public worship. That each of these features may be made to contribute to worship is undoubted, but he who presumes to use them will find his own need of devotion all the more apparent. The Church that would specialize in features of worship must all the more spiritualize her forces in worship. A hymn book is not the only receptacle of praise. Much of the great music of the world which has been made as a contribution to the Christian thought and feeling of the Church has been lost for want of a cultivated appreciation on the part of believers. A special service of praise that is devotional in itself and leads a congregation to an appreciation of the best of sacred music will be a contributing factor to their spirituality. If, however, these specials are used with a view to fill a depleted Church treasury, or empty pews, which should be occupied by a Church membership, both of which will be as empty again when the specials are not

in use, then an entirely different appeal should be made than these can furnish. To interest a non-Church-going public, or win a way into the thought of a people for a needed cause, any of the special services may be held and have, perhaps, as legitimate a place as an evangelistic service. If the evangelistic service in its informal approach is not to be counted as the most serviceable as a regular service of worship, much less shall these others, with a lesser motive, have a large place in the worship of our Christian congregations. If the minister is to be judged as a promoter of popular religion, or if a Church is to be reckoned for its popularity without regard to piety, then we need not be particular by what means we reach the coveted goal.

The public worship of the Churches needs to be vitalized. This will be done by a vital message from the lips and life of a real messenger of the Lord, if connected with, and supported by, as real and living a Church. Whatever helps

create the desired spiritual atmosphere is not to be despised by the student of religious progress. There is no apology to offer for a lifeless formality, a slovenly neglect, or an indifferent appreciation for any part of Christian worship. The simplicity of a service is never to be considered a deterrent to devotion. The country Church may have every element of real worship if her participants have the "spirit and truth" of worship. Simplicity associated with lifelessness and lack of a devotional spirit is worse than simplicity combined with formalism. The former convicts of laziness, carelessness, or ignorance, or even all of these, while the latter—formalism—if based upon a ritual, brings some offering of worth if it is the contribution of those of other days. The vitalizing of the service of prayer is ever open for thoughtful consideration of both minister and congregation. It is not a question of the use or non-use of a printed prayer or a formal manual of devotion. A lifeless service

can be found with either, and helpful services are found with both. The minister who has no fear that the liberty of his proclamation shall be curtailed because he reads the sermonic literature of the world need have no fear for any impediment in prayer if he read and fill his mind with the prayer literature of the world. What a multitude of public prayers need is a revivifying of the mind as well as purifying of the heart of the worshiper. To listen to the prayers in social service offered by devout men and women, and note the limitations of both desire and expression, will cause one to wish they too might get a wider horizon of aspiration and a larger facility of expression. All worship is so near the supernatural at all times, but so contingent upon the natural, that it becomes the most precarious as well as the most precious of our religious functions.

The duties, privileges, and expressions of Christian worship are in all Protestant communions fundamentally the same.

We have a musical service by the choir and the congregation, prayer, reading from the Bible, the recital of a creed, a sermon, an offering, the celebration of baptism or the Lord's Supper, the reception into Church membership. This would quite make up the list of items of worship, and for the lifetime of a believer these acts in various forms and manifestations will make up his worship. Where vocal expression is used it is largely in some form of sacred words. It must become apparent at once that ethical and spiritual effectiveness is dependent upon the truth and expression of these sacred words. They must be carefully chosen if moral motives and spiritual desires are to be inculcated into the lives of the worshipers. It is not our task to discuss in this connection the use or abuse of a ritual. The people for whom this is written have settled the question that there is to be no clearly prescribed ritual that would in any large way curtail the liberties of individual expression.

The tendency is for form to outlive the faith that gave it birth. Too often the form is held after the spirit has departed from it. The Christian worship seeks to emphasize a simplicity of expression that may be adjusted to the recurring new life in the believers. It is the fundamental value Christianity attaches to the inward experience over the outward acts. This very emphasis of the non-liturgical Churches makes their task the harder, for they must seek such experience as shall constantly satisfy the soul life of the believer, and with this such new made expression as shall commend the experience to others. If there is value in the experience it must have communicative value in order to be of effect in an act of worship. It is this very communicative value of experience that is fundamental to true worship. When Christianity took hold of the heart of the world it brought its new thoughts, beliefs, and emotions, and there were no rites or forms to contain them. In the ritual worship of the

Temple there was little chance for the expression of the new thought of God as Father, Christ as a Savior, the life in the Spirit, a risen Lord or freedom from sin. The disciples had a sense of the attending experience of this knowledge, but a large task was theirs when they attempted to communicate this experience. The heathen world thought the Christian had no form of worship at all. He did not have, in the older sense of worship by processions, sacrifices, and liturgies. The method of approach was now by praise and prayer and preaching. The sum of their individual experiences and their willingness of expression constitutes the glory of the early Church. A Christian may be selfish in his worship. He may have only in mind the experience that shall bring self-gratification. If he neglects the expression of *that* experience he does not enter into the largest measure of worship at all. Exception is sometimes taken to the use of our common phrases for worship, such as "Church

service" or "religious services" or "divine service," on the ground that it is not a service we are giving, but rather it is an act of receiving. Do not our acts of service in worship create in us such dispositions as make it possible for God to give to us? Co-operative thinking works for the general good of an audience. Grasping after spiritual truth in a congregation will help fix the truth if it is made clear. One worshiper recognizing the presence of God helps, even unconsciously, another to a like recognition. Men who came into the Kingdom of God by a marked experience have often lived under the shadow of that same experience until it has become a simple form. Repentance as a continuous experience is an essential to Christian progress. A service of worship that does not give a chance of repentance in prayer or psalm has lost an opportunity in the spiritual life of at least some worshipers, if not all. The same may be said of every longing of the soul. The most

helpful worship is when these soul longings are brought to attention and the worshiper responds in his own heart to the appeal made. It is this constant "going up to God" in life that makes for the largest and best in Christian character. The best worship will in a sane way help a congregation express its varied and vast desires, and its many moods. To help the individual worshipers find themselves as well as find God there should be adoration, gratitude, trust, penitence, pleading, pledging, surrender, sympathy, and the multitude of personal desires that crowd the life of the best Christian. The man with longings for a better life should find in worship an expression of his need. The oftener we find the impulse for the good, the more willing we are to recognize the holy, the surer we are in having God.

WORSHIP AND CHURCH ATTENDANCE

WE do not consider the origin or sanction of the Christian Sabbath. It is the established and recognized religious day of the Christian. The question is not one that has to do with the origin of the day, but how can man best use this day set apart by the consensus of religious opinion as a special "day of the Lord?" As a day of rest, how can portions of it be best used in worship? In the public press, by the people, and among ministers there is a constant deploring of the prevailing and increasing neglect of divine worship. A general lament is heard in every land because of an indifferent regard for the Sabbath day. Many are attempting to give the cause, or causes, leading to a neglect of the day. Some are noting with emphasis the neglect on the part of thinking men; a practical agnosticism on the part of all men; a breach between the Church and the masses; a lack of conviction on the part of the members of

the Church on the fundamental doctrines of Christianity; the need of readjusting our whole mental viewpoint and catching the meaning and inculcating the spirit of modern enlightenment; a voice urging us not to mend but mind the tenets of our faith; a diversity of reasons even to contradictions. There is no single reason, but there are many. The fact remains that an increasing number of all classes are drifting from the Church. The barriers against this tendency are to be found within and not without the Church. The people who have a workable creed and a living faith, those who have a triumphant rather than a tentative Christian life—these are the barriers against a tendency to neglect the Church. We have given the time in criticising the wanderers from worship when it should have been given to cultivating the worship. It is not a more elaborate ritual, but a more essential and vital relationship. It is not enough to journey to the house of the Lord, but there should

be found enough of the joy of the Lord to pay for the toil of the journey. The world about every Church is a needy world. It has its needs that can not be supplied alone by a delivery wagon or an ambulance. Acts of charity and mercy are the fruits of religion, but not the springs of religion. The Church should see the folks with "ungirt loins" and "unlit lamps," and help gird men for toil and light again their lamp of hope. There are times to give a loaf or garment for the comfort of our fellow-men. We should at all times be girding men to earn their own loaf and garment of comfort. Too many Christians have little enough oil for their own lamp and can not give to light the way for another.

There are many people who declare they care for little in worship other than the sermon. They do not recognize the helpfulness of the worshiping unit, and do not bring into the service anything but their own need, or intellectual desire. When Christian people learn that wor-

ship is not a sermon, a preacher, an organ, or a choir, but that these with all other accessories are but the sacramental emblems of all holy worship, we shall have gained much. "The center of gravity in any sacrament lies not in the material element, but in the communal act." Thus the center of gravity in worship is not in the material elements of that worship, but in the communal act that brings a congregation to the recognition of the personal Christ. A man might perform an act of private devotion and think only of himself and the effect of his act upon himself, but no man can perform an act of public worship and ignore his fellow-worshipers. It is not a question of whether I am personally inclined to sing or pray or read or give when I go to worship. No man really worships who goes to the Church for the purpose of hearing a sermon or a solo. He becomes a living worshiper in so far as he is an emblem of the holy sacrament of worship. If preaching is the only thing

in worship, why should men see the necessity of so much diligence in Church attendance? Other voices than the preacher's are bringing a real evangel. The public press is doing a vast work in bringing some kind of a gospel to the people, and they need not go to Church. The fear is that the press and pulpit in many communities are too near in the kind of gospel that is now being proclaimed. Men are proclaiming the apparent truths of Christianity in the schools, in the lecture halls, in books and magazines. If worship reaches the end of its being alone in the sermon, then we must confess that much of its need is eliminated from the experiences of men of to-day. If the sermon is the main item of public worship, then a man hearing it is in a personal, rather than a communal act, and one sermon in a day is quite sufficient for the personal needs of any man. A man who sees his Church attendance approaching the sacramental ideal, and his acts of worship as emblems

of his Lord to be given as a communal act for the good of all, will find his attendance an essential, his acts a service, and his worship a saving power in the community. This sacramental ideal in worship does not nullify a single act of worship, but magnifies them all. The sermon is not less, but more. It is no longer a speech, an essay, or a discussion. It is the minister's offering as an emblem of his Lord. The sermon retains its spiritual characteristics—it is an evangel.

The general items of interest in the consideration of the subject of Church attendance are the kind of service, our obligation to it, the time of holding such service, and the length of time the service shall continue. The time for holding a service of worship on Sunday should be largely determined by local conditions. One hour has proven equally as good as any other, providing a real accommodation is afforded the largest number of people. The number of services any man shall attend upon the Sabbath and keep

the day holy can not be exactly specified. The most valuable members of the various Churches of America are those who are at least found in the two public services of worship for each Sabbath. Other religious exercises of the Churches are engaged in by many Christians and are thoroughly enjoyed. A man who drives himself through five or six services every Sabbath day may well question whether he is engaged in worship or a sort of religious dissipation. That the rest of Sunday is more than animal rest is undoubted, but that it applies to man as well as beast can not be denied. The multiplicity of services on Sunday has undoubtedly lessened the attendance in the two public services of worship. The leaders in our Sunday school movement, in the past as in the present, emphasize the attendance of the children upon the regular worship in the Church. Some have been so pronounced as to urge an absence from the Sunday school rather than from the Church worship. The

fact remains that wherever a Church has a double service of the Sunday school and public worship in succession the children are largely absent from the worship. This absence is not so much the fault of the child as the parent. Parents in increasingly large numbers are insisting that the child shall not be kept in any religious services for a period of two hours. Many parents do not seem to distinguish any difference between a Sunday school, a Junior Society, and a Church. In the mind of these the service of one may easily take the place of the other for the purpose of the religious worship of the child. It is this lack of discrimination on the part of the Christian parent that has left the Church with a following that has little conviction in the matter of Church attendance. The young people's society in many communities has an effect upon the evening worship like that of the Sunday school upon the morning worship. There is the same lack of discrimination in the Church

among both old and young as to the differences of exercises known as religious. A young people's devotional service or a Sunday school service can never supplant the service of worship, and in the life of the individual Christian it will never take a large place as a function of worship. The work of the youth, if not the worship, is too well established to expect any considerable change shall be made as to form. To eliminate the program of religious exercises as carried on by the youth would do irreparable harm. It does, however, remain that a needed adjustment should be made that we may keep all the forces of the Church to the absolutely essential requirements of the Christian religion, and the young as well as the old shall become devout worshipers.

The apparent need in the multiplicity of Sunday services is brevity. It may be true that there are those "who paralyze preachers by a demand for brevity before everything else." We have the other

alternative of long sermons and services and paralyzed Churches. There are those who even think a thirty-minute sermon would make some men more effective ministers. We may not "have grasped the rudiments of the first idea of Christian worship," because we hold for the short sermon with a brief service. It must be recognized that in America we have practically everywhere the double service of both morning and evening, and this is a vastly different problem than that of men who have but the single service of worship for the morning and evening of the Sabbath day. Neither is the minister becoming a priest, or unsatisfactory, that the American congregation continues to be insistent upon briefer services for their Churches. The Church must squarely face conditions and adjust her services of worship to the reasonable demand of her people. The big problem of the day is how to develop the spiritual life of the people we have. The problem of the relation of the youth

to the Church is not settled because they are in some way connected with the work of the Church. The primary weakness of the young people's work has arisen from the fact of their being left to find their own means of religious expression without any instruction in the means already at hand. One of the biggest problems of the Church of to-day and our immediate future is how to hold the children and youth to religious worship. The child is not recognized as a part of the worshiping unit. In that Church where, at the public morning worship, a children's hymn is sung, a short address given for the children, a prayer offered that shall include their needs, and an opportunity and the ability furnished them of making an offering, there will be found the children, if the parents make no objection. It will require an entire readjustment in many, if not most, of our Churches if we put the children back in the pews and hold them there because they want to stay. The service of worship

that does not make its appeal to the youth may well be put under suspicion. A revival of worship among the children of the Churches is one of the most pressing needs of the present. The problem of Church attendance will be an increasingly difficult one in proportion as the need of the worship of childhood is not met.

Some people are trying to find justification for an indifferent Church attendance by deflecting attention from themselves and calling attention to the humanitarian, educational, and charitable side of the Christian religion. If you eliminate the element of religious worship from our present-day Christianity you have left little more than an indefensible humanitarianism without propagating or sustaining influence to last its generation. As a matter of experience, those who are living the most helpfully in the community, whether in city, town, or country, are those who have both desire and delight in worship. It would be

little credit to the American youth to try to account for any lack of devotion to worship by holding him as an example of interested manhood in other works of really Christian value. The young do not advance such spurious reasons. The young people most interested in general works of Christian character are those most interested in the personal elements of private and public devotions.

WORSHIP AND PUNCTUALITY

ONE of the most grievous errors attached to the American Churches is the habitual and well-nigh universal practice of coming into the service of worship after it has begun. There are people in nearly every Church who make no pretentions of coming into the Church for the purpose of worship until after the singing of the first hymn. To come into the Church during the so-called "preliminaries" or "introductory services" is the settled purpose of many Church members. The writer has seen over fifty people, on repeated occasions, enter the Church for worship after the prayer had been offered. When a minister was asked why he could not get from the worship all he expected any worshiper should receive, he answered it was in part from the fact of the interruptions of the service for which he felt an unusual responsibility. To bear out the reality of his difficulty, he called at-

tention to a condition, not unusually exaggerated, of having five elders out of seven of the Church come into the worship some time after the service had begun. When people can be found in good time at the house of pleasure, the concert hall, or the social gathering, they should be expected to be in good time in the house of worship. If a man of good taste hesitates to disturb a social function by a tardy entrance, how much more shall a Christian hesitate to disturb a service of holy worship. Self-respect should limit the number of men and women who would venture the entire length of a church building after twenty minutes of a service of worship was past. To see the service of worship practically stopped until a crowd of late-comers can be seated, or to have the organist play at specified places in the service for the same purpose, convicts of the lack of good taste, a moral obtuseness, and an unholy act. No one seems yet to have discovered a drastic measure sufficient to correct

this great evil on the part of the American Church-goer.

There surely can be no excuse for the man who attributes his late coming into worship to the fact of his having but little interest in that service other than to listen to a sermon. Here again is to be seen our fundamental defect in minimizing worship. Either prayer or praise is quite as essential to real worship as is preaching. No man is prepared for a sermon who has made himself a disturbing factor by entering a Church during the worship. The best preparation for receiving a sermon is in participating in the various acts of worship. If there is a co-operative value in listening to a sermon, there is a greater value in the united prayers of a congregation.

It is quite true we have largely omitted from our life in both form and spirit that which is found in the unwritten liturgy of the old Scottish family worship where there was a frequent petition on Saturday night: "Prepare us for the Sabbath

which is drawing on." The encroachment of the secular on the sacred is very marked in our way of spending Saturday night. We have left out of our reckoning of the Genesis account of creation of days, the statement in full, "And the evening and the morning were the first day." We need a Saturday evening to go with a Sunday morning in order that we may have a full day of rest and worship. It will take less Saturday evening dissipation to bring more Sunday morning devotion. It is probably true of us that "We have bustle all the week and baldness all the Sunday." The keeping of late hours in shop, store, social life, and home has undoubtedly much to do with the lack of punctuality on the Sabbath morning.

An item of practical consideration in the topic of punctuality is the hour fixed for the opening of worship. We are very unyielding in the hours appointed for the public worship. There is little deviation from the hours of half-past ten and

eleven o'clock in the morning, and half-past seven and eight o'clock in the evening. That these are not the only hours adapted to worship, or even the best hours for all communities, could be easily proven. The Roman Catholic Church show us they can use hours of worship wholly different from those we would select. Protestant Churches in Ireland have the opening hour of worship at half-past eleven o'clock in the morning and at half-past six o'clock in the evening. The Churches of Scotland and England generally have the opening hour of worship at eleven o'clock in the morning, but some use eleven-thirty o'clock, and still others have the first service at twelve o'clock. In many communities the second service of the day is at two o'clock in the afternoon. Six-thirty o'clock in the evening is the very common hour for the second service. These hours might not be found the most convenient for many American communities, but the main contention is that

there is no virtue in the selection of one hour over another, providing only an hour is found when people can be expected and should be expected to be present at the opening of the worship. The main thing to be said in favor of the varied hours of service in Great Britain is that the worshipers are in their pews before the minister enters to begin his part of the worship. The writer took occasion to notice in conducting worship thirty times in Scotland, in various Churches located in towns and cities, that during these services not over ten people entered the church after the first word of the worship was spoken. A congregation that has had the benefit of such punctuality will be as insistent upon its continuance as any minister could be. For the two services of regular worship there is but one consistent rule for the worshiper to observe, and that is: If he find he has arrived after the service has begun, that he offer up his prayer at the door and return to his home. Where

this has been observed as the habit of a particular Church, the problem of punctuality has been solved. The Church has not suffered from the absence of its tardy member, and the member has found a corrective of an exceedingly bad habit.

The minister will prove of little benefit to the correction of tardiness in the Church worship by becoming a party to it. A preacher's conduct is set forth in one of our Churches in the following: "Be punctual. Do everything exactly at the time. And do not mend our rules, but keep them: not for wrath, but for conscience' sake." A minister who begins a service of worship late is guilty of a grievous blunder, and may reasonably be held culpably negligent.

The hour fixed for closing a service of worship may not be so precisely selected as the hour for opening, but punctuality here is not to be despised. The officials of a Church with the minister should determine the usual length of service, and in the main the time set should be observed.

WORSHIP AND THE SERVICE OF PRAISE

THERE is no part of worship that has been so universally recognized as having an unquestioned place as the service of praise. The service of praise has been most bitterly contested as to the forms of expression that shall be used. Great Churches, and even nations, have been brought to a high passion in the discussion of the use or non-use of an instrument of music in the service of worship. There is no longer any question as to the use of an instrument, but there is still the question as to the how and when in the use of an instrument. There is not an item of praise worship that has not been carefully and earnestly considered. There is no part of our worship where we are as far from unanimity as we are in the service and accessories of praise. As it is impossible to get an agreement of judgment on the various topics, it remains for us to attempt to give the view that may appeal to reason, conform to historical require-

ments, and represent a workable service. There shall be no attempt to thrust upon any one only personal notions, or fix the judgment of one against the many. The whole effort should be in the line of practical considerations of the essentials of praise worship. The attempt should be to seek for both liberty and propriety in things religious.

The suggestion of Mr. Herbert Booth may be kept in mind while thinking upon this important topic. He said, "Our power is in what we sing about, not in how we sing." The music of worship must be considered a means and not an end. There are the two standpoints—first, of the musician, and secondly, that of the man who is jealous for the proprieties of divine worship. The first may easily miss the caution Father Haberl gave at the St. Cecilia Congress, at Mainz, in 1884, when he said, "The Church wishes for worship in music, but not for the worship of music."

The service of praise makes the first

insistent demand on the congregation as conceived as the worshiping unit. It is time to state that the theory of worship herein considered makes for the "Priesthood of the congregation." It is not the minister or organist or choir, but the congregation that must be recognized as the worshiping unit in every part of the service. The minister, the organist, and the choir are not apart from the congregation, but are part of it. Whatever helps the congregation in worship shall be accepted, and whatever hinders the congregation may well be rejected.

There have been mystics and monks of the past who thought it their privilege to indulge solitary, ecstatic, and sometimes seraphic contemplation free from any external distractions, such as an instrument of music or the voice in praise. The Friends objected to singing as a form of worship, and about three hundred years ago there was no singing or music of any kind in the Baptist Churches of England. Even to sing the songs of

David was a misdemeanor in England in a former day. The "silent Church" or the "songless sanctuary" has not been unknown in the past, but it usually arose from the effort of the people to make them such, and from a conviction that music did not tend toward real worship. To-day we approach the "songless sanctuary," convinced it ought to be a house of praise. Our silence arises not from intention, but from a lack of interest and instruction.

The first human attempt in making a spiritual impression upon a worshiper entering the church is that of the organist in his use of the organ. The organist has one of the real opportunities in contributing to the worship of an audience. It is within his power to so hold and impress a gathering audience that it shall have been brought into a worshiping unit before the minister has even entered the room. An organist at his place in time to welcome the first of the coming worshipers into the church

has the most difficult and yet the most exhilarating task of any who may be relied upon to create an atmosphere of spiritual devotion. If he has exercised due care in the selection of the opening themes, he can even compel a worshipful attitude as well as a worshipful spirit. He can practically make the people approach their worship with due reverence and godly fear. In all of the opening of the service he is the master of the situation. The remaining part of the hour will be for him a service of helpfulness to some other part of the acts of worship. The people entering the place of worship will not all come recognizing the presence of the Lord of the temple, but they can be solemnized, or, if need be, subdued, by the impressions of the organ music, if this be given with soulful interest and a correct choice of themes. The organist not only has an opportunity in the prelude of the service, but he has quite as essential a place in the postlude. It has been a strange wonder to many a

minister why, after an appeal has been made to the more serious nature of an audience, it shall be dissipated the moment after the benediction has been pronounced by the forte and sometimes over-jubilant march by which the people are sent from the church. The transition from the pleading to the martial, from the tender to the boisterous, and from the penitential to the jubilant, which is often seen in going from the impressions of a sermon to that of the organ postlude, is destructive to the unitary impression sought after. If the organist has, at the beginning, been instrumental in gathering in the wanderings of mind and heart of an assembling congregation, he has also the opportunity of the last impression which may be left as a benediction upon a departing worshiper. The use of the organ in the service of hymn singing is often ineffective. Mr. John Spencer Curwen, member of the Royal Academy of Music, was so impressed with a conversation he once had with Ira D. Sankey

on the use of the organ, that he has included the substance of the conversation in one of his books on music. Mr. Sankey said: "I use my reed-organ just to support my own voice or the voice of the choir. But Oh! the rushing and roaring of the organ that often greets me when I attend a Church—the din is something so great I can not sing. If the organists must make a noise, let them play a solo. When voices are singing, voices ought to be at the top." We have heard organists who would cease with the organ accompaniment during a hymn for several measures, and in this way the audience could see how effectively it was engaged in the service of praise. A congregation trained in the pauses of an organist will soon find it is not so entirely dependent upon the accompaniment as is the usual company of worshipers.

The location of the organ, organist, and choir would properly be considered under the topic of church architecture, but its connection with the item of praise

is so close it may well be considered here. The Protestant Churches in America are generally agreed that the organ shall not be placed in a rear gallery of the church, as is the custom of the Roman Catholic churches. Some of the organs are placed at the right hand of the pulpit, and some at the left, but in a larger number of places the organ is at the rear of the minister's platform, and sometimes raised considerably above the minister's desk. The organs in the churches of Scotland are usually in front of the pulpit, and below the minister's platform. Each of the locations named have favoring considerations. The congregation recognized as the worshiping unit would find its theory most practically carried out in a church where the arrangements of the choir and organist are such as to locate them in close proximity to the congregation. If the organist is to be director of the choir, then the position of the English-Scotch choir and console is best. It is wholly unnecessary in these days

that the organist shall be put upon a bench high above the choir and minister, and at the rear of both. Let the console be detached from the organ and placed where the organist can see both the choir and the minister. It may not be wise for the organist to be the director of voices, but where it is necessary the organist is in a position of visible command. In this position he is also in a relationship with the minister that will make their work of greater harmony. The attached console in America is common, but it is not convenient. Every advantage suggested for the detached console applies in the use of a reed organ or a piano. Let no architect declare this arrangement disturbs the beauty and effectiveness of arrangement in the front of a church building. The most beautiful and at the same time the most churchly interior effects found in modern church architecture is where the minister's platform is placed high with the background of the organ, or, if the organ is divided, and placed on

either side of the alcove, then a dome effect, which adds greatly to acoustic effects, may be used. Below and in front of the high platform of the preacher is the choir platform. To the front and facing the choir is the console. This arrangement of choir platform lends itself to any service of worship in the form of any Church. In those Churches where the people meet about the chancel to receive the Holy Communion, a second platform, extending the entire distance around the choir platform, is furnished with its altar. In this way the largest provision is made for the special service of the Communion. In those Churches where the elders distribute the elements of the Holy Communion, their place is in the choir arrangements, and from this platform the service of the Communion is conducted. The effect upon the choir in the change from the rear position to the front is unmistakable. It is not for one Church or city or denomination to say of another, "Thou art guiltier than

I," in the lack of decorum in the choir. The country choir is no more culpable than is the city choir: the paid choir is no better than the voluntary. There are choirs where the spirit of reverence and devotion prevails. That there is great laxity on the part of Church choirs in every city and in every denomination can be easily verified in the visit of ten churches in various localities and of different faiths. We would make it easy for a choir to worship while they are engaged in leading a congregation in worship. Another consideration which favors placing the choir in front of the minister's platform arises from the fact that many churches have high ceilings and the organ is placed so high, with its swell box at a height, that makes it impossible for the singers immediately under the organ to get the support of the organ they would get if they were farther removed, and at the front.

We do not consider the choir other than in the act of worship. Its instruc-

tion or its management would be a topic beside the mark. The entrance into their respective places is usually collective. Some Churches prefer the members of the choir shall take their places one by one, as does the congregation. Where the choir assembles to enter as a company, some ministers meet with them and have a prayer before they enter upon the worship. Everything about a service should be suggestive of the congregational unit of worship, and the entrance and attitude of a choir will have much of suggestive effect in a recognition of this relationship.

Mr. W. H. Monk, an editor of "Hymns, Ancient and Modern," declared, "The better the choir singing in any church the worse will be the congregational singing." Those who are most insistent that we are not at our full task until we have solicited the service of every worshiper in praise are also those who are finding greatest help in their efforts in the assistance of a

choir. The statement of some that people would rather sing than be sung to is true only in part. It takes more than a Disciplinary injunction, "Let all the people sing," or the same message flashed before a congregation every time it rises for the praise, to get all the people to sing. The service of praise will never reach the desired goal in any particular Church until all the people who can sing shall accept their duty and see their privilege. The Methodist Discipline contains the important, if ineffective, injunction, "As singing is a part of divine worship in which all ought to unite, therefore exhort every person in the congregation to sing, not one in ten only." Congregational singing is desired, but how to bring it about is the problem ever open. The most effective service of praise from the standpoint of worship has been observed in those churches where a choir was used to lead the congregation. Then every man, woman, and child stood and sang as best they

could in an act of reverent and devout worship. Some notably large choirs in the city have been instructed together as a musical organization, but in the service of worship the choir has been broken into groups and arranged in various parts of the auditorium, and the congregation having a good lead in every part, were led to join heartily. With all the clamoring on the part of some people for new hymns, it might be well to suggest that we stay long enough with those in use to really learn them and sing them. A congregation proved itself very effective in a praise worship by singing both of the morning hymns to the same tune. We are apt to sacrifice value for variety, and especially is this true in Church music. Every member of every congregation should attempt to sing the hymns, the Gloria Patri, the Lord's Prayer, and any other portion of praise worship that is in continuous use in the Church service. We have an unsolved problem in the majority of Churches in

the Church music. Too much of the work of the Church is looked at from a temporary point of view. In the case of music the Church gives the matter to a committee that is willing to find something for the year or the session that will answer the purpose without so much as considering the question of cultivating the congregation, and at the end of a year progress has not been made. The congregation recognizing its place as the worshiping unit in the service of praise will hasten the time hoped for by Professor Blaikie, and expressed by him many years ago: "Imagination can hardly set bounds to the spiritual gain that would come to congregations—if the singing could be brought up to its proper level—if every psalm and hymn were a real cardiphonia, the appropriate utterance of the heart."

The kind of music, the selection of praise numbers, the use and the kind of hymn-books—all have an important relation to the service of praise. The va-

rious Churches have an accepted hymnology which, in the main, is a credit to the ability of these Churches musically, intellectually, and spiritually. The danger becomes apparent when we know that many Churches are not using an accredited hymnal. There is an ardent advocacy for the use of certain hymns and tunes as make it quite impossible to develop spirituality where they are in sole use. In a day of the making of so many hymn-books, and of such keen interest of the publishers in the sale of the same, it is more than ever incumbent upon the Churches—in sheer protection—that they look with close scrutiny to any book of praise that may be used in public worship. The appeal to the vulgar because some are claiming the masses are inherently vulgar, is wrong, both in the premise of the vulgarity of the crowd or that the appeal should come from their own standards. The entire folk-song of the nations deny the theory. A critic has said: "One can not believe that

the Reformation would have carried greater conviction had Luther sung 'Hold the fort' instead of 'A safe stronghold:" or that the Covenanters would have given evidence of deeper feeling had they exchanged the old Scottish psalm tunes for things like 'Tell mother I'll be there.'" That it is possible to arrest the attention of some sinful soul by sentiment, or even sound, there is no doubt, but you can not build a stalwart Christian character on either sound or sentiment. There may be unjust criticism of the author who declares he was made sad over the young man who at a meeting was "brightly converted," and in twenty-four hours lapsed to a low dancing saloon, by saying, "Perhaps, after all, the young man was merely following the ragtime of the revival meeting to its fountain-head." Because hymns, like people of mediocre life, have been blessed of God in turning some to righteousness should be no conclusive reason that a standard of mediocre life shall be that most blessed

of God in the saving of the world. The degree of feeling in devotional music can be, and should be made, to reach the highest and most intense emotional experiences. We should, however, make the praise service express thought as well as feeling, sense as well as sound. A minister has an accredited hymn-book put in his hand, and one of the largest services for his people will be in teaching them to appreciate it, sing it, and worship God in it. There are ministers who give no attention to the service of praise at all. Some ministers have made no selection of hymns before coming into the service, and make a selection at random, or they depend upon the selection of the organist or a choir leader. A man stands accused of sheer shiftlessness who has given no thought to the items of praise in the service of worship. It is reasonable to expect, if the minister has an idea as to what he would attempt to do with a service, he should be interested to have everything of that service con-

spire to the one end of accomplishing his purpose. He is the only one who can, with any degree of knowledge, make the selection of appropriate praise.

The character of the opening praise is not fixed with any great unanimity. The majority of American Churches begin with a hymn. Some have raised objection to the use of a hymn as an opening of the praise service because a hymn is jubilant, and at the commencement of worship the people of faith should come before their Lord in a penitential as well as a reverential manner. We have been told, by those who are jealous for the use of the psalm in worship, that they would consider it as flippant to begin a service of holy worship by the use of a hymn. The invocation in some Churches takes the place of an opening expression of a congregation. The means of approach can be made by the use of a wisely selected hymn.

It may well be regretted that the hymn-book of Israel is not made better

use of by the Churches of America. It may not be the part of wisdom to insist that our whole praise service shall depend upon the Psalms for the substance of expression, but a careful elimination, as is seen in most Church hymnarys, is more unwise. That the Psalms lend themselves to the tunes that are acceptable in any worship is shown by the Church that makes its praise from the Psalms, set to tunes, of general acceptance. If the Churches could get but a glimpse of the beauty and power of the Psalms that touched the soul of Perowne when he tried to speak their praise, we would have more of their glory revealed to the souls of other men. "If the best prayer-book, the Hebrew Psalter is also the best of hymn-books. Of all devotion, whether sung or spoken, it is the model—at once the sublimest and safest, at once the most exalted and most sober. It is the only entire book in the Bible which God has given expressly to aid and guide the worship of man: and whilst some of

its strains come down to the cradle, others ascend to a height of Scriptural communion, when for a higher note a seraph's voice would be needed, and angels take up the chorus. And whilst adapted to every capacity in the range of experience, it includes any case, from the depths of penitential remorse to the fullest and most exulting realization of God's friendship. And if the most comprehensive of manuals, let it not be forgotten that it is withal the most catholic. No sect refuses it, and none can monopolize it. The Episcopalian chants it in his cathedral, and the Nonconformist in his chapel; the Quaker reads it in his closet, and its antiphonies re-echo in the imperial sanctuaries of Moscow and Vienna; and just as the hunted Covenanters sang it on the hills of Scotland two hundred years ago the Jew still sings it in the synagogue of London. Its pages have often been blotted with the tears of those whom others have decreed hard and cold, and whom they have treated

with suspicion or contempt. Its words have gone up to God mingled with the sighs, or scarcely uttered in the heart-broken anguish of those whom Pharisees called sinners, of those whom Christians denounced as heretics or infidels, but who loved God and truth above all things else—surely it is holy ground. We can not pray the Psalms without realizing in a very special manner the communion of saints, the oneness of the Church militant and the Church triumphant. We can not pray the Psalms without having our hearts opened, our affections enlarged, or our thoughts drawn heavenward. He who can pray the best is nearest to God, knows most of the spirit of Christ, is ripest for heaven."

If the people have hymn-books provided, it is unnecessary for the minister to read the hymn. A good reader may be able to interpret a hymn for an audience so as to interest the worshipers in the singing. We have heard ministers announce the subject of the hymn, others

read the opening line, and still others announce the number of the hymn; the organist plays a prelude, then the minister makes a second announcement of the number and reads the opening lines, the congregation stands and takes the first note with the organ. The main thing is that the people shall know the number, have the place of the hymn, and be in readiness for the singing. Shall all the verses of a hymn be sung? In general they should be all sung for the reason that a poem or hymn should be a unit of thought. We should avoid breaking the hymn in the middle or eliminating in various parts. The congregation that sang for the writer a hymn of fourteen verses made itself a bit monotonous. Those selections of praise that lend themselves to five verses, or less, are usually best. The committees on Church hymnary are given the large task of this selection. An audience will sing better, will more generally take part, and will give better heed to this part of service

if they are standing. There is no good reason why a congregation should remain seated while in the act of praise. To see an audience seated during the singing of the Gloria Patri accuses it of not knowing the import of the message. The very least a worshiper can do is to stand, if he can not sing, while a congregation brings its "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

The anthem or solo has a recognized place in the worship of the American Churches. This adds interest to the work of a choir, and also to the worship of an audience. Our special offerings of praise would not bear the close scrutiny of the critic. It is not uncommon that one hears a solo that expresses sentiment that would not stand analysis and explanation to an audience of worshipers. The best the genius of the world has produced is at the command of the Churches. In the Presbyterian Churches

of Scotland there is an accredited anthem-book which is furnished the congregation with the Church hymnary and the Bible. The minister announces the anthem as he does the hymn, and the people stand and sing with the choir. It may be observed that congregational singing has reached a more effective place in Scotland than in America. The anthems are a choice collection of the less difficult, and a singing congregation, with the aid of a good choir, will make a creditable presentation of the best known of these anthems. There are always members of a congregation who think they are able to sing quite as well as those who are selected for the choir, and this gives them their opportunity. Of those audiences observed, it would seem that they take about the part in singing the anthem that an American audience takes in singing the hymns.

An appropriate close for the praise service is in the use of the Doxology. Any closing hymn, selected in long

meter, may be finished, and to the same tune the Doxology may be effectively sung.

The question of congregational singing is not how often shall we sing, or how long, or when, but how. When we think that an organist may interpret a hymn in one way, the director of music another, and the audience still another, we are only considering the possibilities of any of our hymn singing. The markings of hymns for the purpose of a like interpretation by the organist, choir, and congregation is not only possible, but practically in operation with a great many Churches, and it would be to the advantage if in use by all. Take the markings as they stand in a Church hymnary: *p*, soft; *pp*, very soft; *m*, medium; *mp*, rather soft; *mf*, rather loud; *f*, loud; *ff*, very loud; *c*, increasing in loudness; *d*, diminishing in loudness. Apply this interpretation to the well-known hymn, and think of a great

congregation following it closely, and you have what actually takes place in many audiences where this method is used.

mp 1 Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!
Even though it be a cross
That raiseth me,
c Still all my song shall be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
d Nearer to Thee!

p 2 Though, like the wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone,
c Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
d Nearer to Thee!

m 3 There let the way appear
Steps unto heaven;
All that Thou sendest me
In mercy given;
c Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
d Nearer to Thee!

mf 4 Then, with my waking thoughts
Bright with Thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs
Bethel I'll raise;
c So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
d Nearer to Thee!

f 5 Or if, on joyful wing
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,
Upwards I fly,
c Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
d Nearer to Thee!

WORSHIP AND THE USE OF THE BIBLE

WE give scant courtesy to the Bible in our Churches. Many Churches make no provision for the use of the Bible by the congregation and others only by the reading of a responsive lesson. No one would presume to eliminate the reading of the Scriptures from the service altogether, but what do we make of it? Why is the Bible read so indifferently and why are the people so inattentive to this part of the service? We stop the entrance of the tardy worshipers at the door if the minister is speaking to God in prayer, or we do the same if a solo of praise is being sung. Are these of more consequence than when God speaks to us? It is not to be questioned that all interruptions of prayer and praise should cease, but more so should this be true when "Thus saith the Lord" is being listened to. There is an historical succession in Bible reading that we do not always think of. Dean Stanley notes for us that, "The Bible

and the reading of the Bible as an instrument of instruction may be said to have been begun on the sunrise of the day when Ezra unrolled the parchment scroll of the Law. It was a new thought that the divine will could be communicated by a dead literature as well as by a living voice." The Bible places in our hands a literature practically as varied as the world's literature. Its experiences are the unfolding of all those of the human heart. A congregation has, as a contribution to its worship, the best expression for any and every mood of the soul of the worshipers. Neither height nor depth nor length nor breadth of Christian experience in any congregation will find itself outside the bounds of the Bible expression. It is as fresh as the last experience of man. It is a message of edification and devotion. How many ministers think of edifying a people, and how many of the people enter into an act of devotion when the Bible is read. The congregation seems more to submit to the

Scriptures than to search the Scriptures. The ministry of some men has been held in grateful memory by the congregation because the reading of the Bible brought its Author nigh. It need not be said that such reading was not something to be gone through. It was not a portion of Scriptures selected without regard to relation or context. Men like these did not drone it through as though there was no difference in meaning. These men recognized the Bible as a channel by which the Holy Ghost could reach the heart of man. They interpreted in voice and manner as well as in exposition. Every man will read inadequately the Bible sometimes during the ministrations of a year, but this shall be no excuse for carelessness at any time.

The congregations of Scotland have reached an ideal use of the Bible as an act of devotion. Every member of the congregation is provided with a Bible. When a Scripture lesson is announced the worshiper finds the portion to be

read and follows closely to the end of the reading. In like manner the text is found. The minister may leave the text, never to return, but he will find his congregation at the place ready to welcome him should he come back. In this way the congregation saves itself not only from wrong readings, but wrong interpretations as well. This use of the Bible holds the idea of the congregation remaining the worshiping unit throughout the service.

If a minister is prompted to attempt to help his people in an appreciation of the use of the Bible in worship, let him prepare his Scripture readings with the same care that he uses in preparation of the sermon, and then give a short interpretation of Scripture that will make an audience wish for a book in hand. Expository preaching is not in common use, but where it is used effectively it has a tendency to make the people wish for a Bible. Children delight in finding designated readings of Scripture, and it

is an added interest to their worship to find the place and follow the reading. Some Churches have received help in an emphasis on Bible reading by having a professional reader bring his services to the aid of the Church and read from the Bible for the evening instead of the use of a sermon.

There are Churches where a courteous act is shown in asking an aged or retired minister or Church leader to read the lesson of public worship. The minister will not need to find the portion of the Bible that shall be read. Often the attention of a congregation will be called to a singularly appropriate message, and with the new voice an added interest is shown in the lesson. A lesson for the Church worship need not always be used as an amplification of the sermon.

The apt quotation of Scripture in public address has been noted in the messages of every great orator. At a time of famine in the English Colonies, John Bright addressed the House of Commons

and climaxed a remarkable speech by the quotation from Jeremiah 9: 21, "For death is come up into our windows, it is entered into our palaces." The most intense, inspirational, and immortal message of man has been in the setting of Bible phraseology. What has been said for the individual can also be held true of the congregation. Not a remarkable occurrence in the community, the country, or the Church should escape the congregation in expressing herself in Scriptural message. There is not an item of praise, hope, sorrow, repentance, confession, need, or longing that can not find itself expressed in some Scriptural words. There is not a mood of the soul, or motive of the life, that can be so well expressed as in the choice selections of Scripture which can be heightened as in no other way by the communal act of a congregation in their public utterance or attention to the same.

WORSHIP AND THE COLLECTION

IS the collection an act of worship? It undoubtedly has been so considered from the beginning of the revelation of God to His people. The will of God was always divined as in some way placing upon man the duty and privilege of giving of the substance given him. The act of the offering was associated with the other acts of worship, and was intimately associated with the temple service. The regular offerings taken in our Church worship to-day is the equivalent or the survival of the gifts in the early Church, out of which were taken the bread and wine for the Lord's Supper and the food for the love-feast. That our offerings are not an act of worship to many Christians would be admitted. To give a piece of silver or copper may have no more element of worship in it than the giving of a half an hour of time to a service in which we have no particular interest. It only has value as an act of worship when per-

formed in the spirit of an act of worship.

A parallel is not overdrawn between prayer and the collection. No one questions the former—why, then, the latter? One is a communion and the other a contribution. One is petition and praise, the other is gift and gratitude. One can no more be eliminated from our personal acts of worship than can the other. An unthinking prayer and an unthinking gift will neither bring much of spiritual returns. To be a recipient of spiritual favor a man must both pay and pray.

As an act of worship the making of an offering is as incumbent upon the minister as upon the member. As an example in liberality the minister's offering will always be significant. A minister will be little more likely to indoctrinate a congregation with the spirit and spiritual significance of liberality and hold himself from the act, than he will to teach and lead to a recognition of the spiritual in prayer, and refrain from praying. The disciples,

on their own account, ask Jesus to teach them to pray, but Jesus, on His own account, sat over against the treasury to see how the people pay. It was not the concern so much as to the amount but the "how" that seemed to take the attention of Jesus. It was the act of worship with which the collection was associated that concerned Jesus then, as it is the act of worship with which our offerings are associated that concern Jesus now. St. Paul has not written at random, but the connection he makes in thought with the collection is not pleasing to those who make little of it. St. Paul has held the collection to a high place not only in the theory and practice of "storing" and receiving, but he swings it into the highest place in the outline of his thought and practice of a Christian life. It is not a beggared theme, but after the mighty world theme of the Resurrection St. Paul brings us to the message, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to

the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye." Let no man apologize for the collection, and the larger act of worship we make it the better. As a general rule, no Church has done its duty or justice to the cause of Christ, or character of its members, until it has been so persistent in precept and example as to bring an offering with every worshiping member of the congregation. This offering should apply to both diets of worship. The parents should not deprive the child of an act of worship that is so essential to both the child and the Church. A father is often heard declare that he gives for all the members of his family. He may furnish the money, but the members of the family should not be ignored in making the offering. It might be asked, Why shall not the father assume still other privileges of the children, and thus go to Church for them or do the praying for all? If the getting of money were the sole consideration, then it would not matter so much from whom it might be re-

ceived. A Church collection is not the same as taking a collection for the purchase of a park or the building of a fountain. The worshiping act is the first consideration in the Church collection.

It is doubtful if Protestantism presents another example of universal giving on the part of worshipers as she does in Scotland. Pew rent is the prevailing custom, but besides the rents for pews a collection is always taken. In the morning service a silver offering will be far in excess of copper, while in most Churches in the evening the order of silver and copper is reversed. It is well understood that every person entering the room will give something. The child gives as invariably as does the parent. By investigation I have found that people will stay from a service if they have not an offering to make. This reluctance does not arise from the fact of any pressure being brought to bear upon the attendants other than their own moral conviction

that it is not right to enter the Lord's worship without some kind of an offering with which to come. Years of training in precept and example have created this conviction. In our land the minister and his officials have not the simple task of getting enough money to pay the bills of a Church, but have the farther and more important work of inculcating the spirit of liberality in the Churches. To what purpose is all our effort if we are not making permanent progress? The only worthy ideal is for the congregation to enlarge the measure of her liberality and consider her offerings as unto God. A minister jokes about the collection to the injury of his Church. The amusing incidents, that are too true, in association with the collection are often a temptation to a minister that he may stir the mind of his people, but it will be better, if there is need of exhortation, that he "shall be but the plain man and speak right on." The sooner we take the collection in our Churches from its

mendicant position the better will it be for all. That salvation is free is a fundamental of our faith, but that a man severs himself from salvation by selfishly holding his substance is undoubted. The offerings we bring help us to "Sacrifice the world's god at the Cross of the Redeemer." Men of wealth or men of business interests think it makes little, if any, difference how they contribute so long as they give a just share to the expenses of the Church. They are to be reminded again that it is the "how" rather than the "how much" that interested Jesus. No man is rich enough in substance or salvation that he may preclude the holy influence which affects his life in this act of holy service regularly done. It not only has the value of an act of duty, but this regular giving becomes the constant barrier man needs against selfishness, pride, and undue regard for material things. It is rightly defined as, "The art of giving effect to love." A true affection is always

strengthened by giving large gifts to the object of that affection. The affection in our religion once begun will find a strengthening influence in the continuous offerings we make for this affection.

The limits of our topic do not require a discussion of the tithe or the conscience that determines the proportion of substance that should be dedicated, but rather the system of gathering that which has been set apart, and makes it an act of worship. The system of Church finance can no more be set aside from its Scriptural requirements than can our systems of faith. The system stated by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians, the sixteenth chapter, is, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send

to bring your gift unto Jerusalem." The items set out in this statement are: The time designated for the offering—"the first day of the week;" the universality of the givers—"every one of you;" the method—"in store;" the amount—"as God hath prospered him;" oversight of the gifts—"whomsoever ye shall approve." The practical import of this must be that as God has prospered us we are to lay by in store, and on Sunday make our offering, to be in charge of those approved by the congregation. In some Churches the provision made in the best judgment of those having approved oversight is in having at the entrance to the church certain receptacles into which the congregation make an offering on entrance to the place of worship. As one expressed it, "We begin with an act of worship as we enter the door of the church." A more common way is in passing plates, or receptacles, among the people, in which they place their offerings. To challenge the

congregation to the spiritual significance of the act, a prayer is offered by the minister while the collectors are standing at the chancel before they have taken the offerings, or a prayer of thanksgiving when they have returned from receiving them. It is not a task that will be recognized as belonging to a child. It is a work for men, approved by the Church, and examples of the thing they are set to do. The offering stands on its own merits and needs no solo or even an organ number to increase its interest. A congregation can well sit in quiet, thoughtful contemplation of "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye, through His poverty, might become rich." If experience is to be a test, then the offering as an act of consecutive worship stands the test, for those who have been most conscientious in their efforts to measure up to the command have been most hearty in their praise of the religious benefits derived. "He

that watcheth providence will never want a providence to watch." There are few acts of a devout soul that will give greater and more satisfactory returns than the contemplation of a gracious providence meeting the act of graciousness in a believing Christian.

WORSHIP AND CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

FEAR and force are not the only ways of accounting for the attendance in large numbers, by both rich and poor, learned and ignorant, upon the worship of certain Churches. There is that in human nature that is appealed to by the beautiful, the sublime, and the mysterious. A beautiful temple with an inspiring service of worship has compelling power. The record of the world's worship is sufficient testimony as to the drawing power of the elements above noted. If this has been accomplished where the purpose of worship has been entirely missed, why, then, shall these very elements, purified by the holy faith of the Christian religion, be less effective? Has Protestant America beautiful churches? She has, and vast sums of money have been used in their erection. We pride ourselves in our willingness to give to church erection. Some of our churches are beautiful, others are questioned from any ideals of beauty,

and still others may be questioned as to whether they serve any of the real purposes of worship. Many an American church would be guessed as being a library, some would make good opera houses, and others remain unclassified from any standpoint of ecclesiastical architecture. A combination of Romanesque fronts and Gothic rears is not uncommon. It is not so much a problem of combinations as it is a problem of convenience. With the vast amount of money expended we ought to get better returns. It is not so much that we do not give as it is that we do not get.

The matter of church building in America has long been left to the fancy of men, well-meaning, without doubt, but unfitted for their tasks. The most of our churches have been built under the ministerial care of comparatively young men. A young minister wants to work with a congregation in building a church. The limitations of small funds and large

demands are the first consideration. To whom shall he turn, with his building committee, for the plans of the proposed church? To a local architect, because he dare not offend a member of his Church in a time like this. The architect may not have any qualification for the task of church building other than that arising from a general knowledge of plans for private or public buildings. If the young minister have a sense of fitness in church architecture he may be able to get a few things helpful in a place of worship. If the building is more pretentious, the difficulties become more prodigious. The secret lament of every minister after he has been useful in church building enterprises is that his finished product is more often a building than a church. Sometimes a temple of mirth rather than a temple of worship. The American churches have this recommendation—that they are not built to last long. The future church building is sure to take on more and more the elements of true

church architecture. They will cease to be the exponents of every architect who has a fancy, or ministers with new features to exploit, or congregations with a fad they would fix upon a community. Some countries have a society, composed of men of various Churches, with the purpose of studying church architecture. One such organization stated its purpose as a study of "The principles of Christian worship, and of the church architecture and allied acts which minister thereto." Monthly meetings are held, papers are presented, visits are made to places of Church interest, and in a restricted way the society held itself in readiness to assist those contemplating building or those intending the restoring of buildings. The transactions are published, and an addition is made in permanent form to our knowledge of church architecture and kindred subjects. If such an organization finds for itself an acceptable place where church architecture is largely established, what could it not

do for a changing view of church architecture?

In spite of all diligence novelty will be introduced into the building of churches. A church—that had more the suggestion of a hunting lodge than a place of worship —sprang up in a large city where a close association to an Ecclesiological Society was sustained.

Many a country church is comfortless and coarsely furnished. A single member, who more than likely rides to the service in his automobile and has the comforts and conveniences of a modern home, could well nigh immortalize himself in the community if he would unostentatiously expend a couple of hundred dollars on a judicious renovation of his country place of worship. If this one, with others, were to go far enough to make the country church attractive, the young people of the community could more easily be held to the Church and the religious life. The country church is usually of one room, and should conform

to the usual plan of building for the purposes of worship. It may have the necessities, beauty, and suggestiveness of any church. It is in the very realm of the possible that a country church, from the very fact that it is small, shall have more elements of beauty and comfort than can be found in the city church. Rosslyn Chapel has stood for nearly five hundred years as a marvel of beauty, and though small, it makes the appeal that is equaled by few, if any, of the cathedrals of the world. Thus it seems possible that a country church should stand in favorable comparison with any of the pretentious churches of our cities.

In the evolution of the present-day preacher and congregation can be seen the evolution of church architecture. In medieval days the churches had to take account of a liturgical service, and were thus built. In our own country there came the day of the great preacher—the church lost much of that which was real churchly and became a hall, a plat-

form. A place was sought for that would conform to the needs of a man of eloquence and with a seating capacity for a large audience. The people need take little, if any, part in the service, and there was no need to be particular about a place for a Bible, a hymn-book, a choir, or an organ. These were reckoned as only minor accessories. The center of all the community's religious interest was in the man who stood on the platform. We are dull indeed if we do not discover a radical change in our present theory of worship. We are not reverting back to medievalism, but evolving to the place where the congregation is the unit rather than the priest of Romanism or the preacher in Protestantism.

In a consideration of the modern church, with its various rooms and appliances for work, we would eliminate all other parts of the building than the auditorium, or that part of the building in which the two public services of worship are held upon the Sabbath. The

modern church should have every appliance for effectiveness in what is known as the work of the Church, but the auditorium should be held to itself as a place for the worship of the congregation. Sunday school children are better prepared for the worship of the Church if they have not been for the Sunday school in the church auditorium. The reverence for both place and service of worship is lessened by the liberties of a Sunday school. Rooms that are separated from the auditorium will answer best the purposes for which they are to be used by the congregation. Our modern church, with all its appointments, is similar to that of the early day, when it was known as the Domus Ecclesias, which afterwards became the Domus Dei—*i. e.*, the place where Christians met the Lord. This idea should be maintained to-day if we are to make for the highest religious culture of the people. Everything about the place of worship should be in keeping

with the holy purpose for which it was dedicated.

The main things about a church that concern this discussion are the heat, light, seats, pulpit, platforms, choir, organ, ventilation, and acoustics. The improper heating and ventilation of churches has killed many sermons, if not people. Whether natural or artificial means of ventilation shall be used need not concern us, for to most of the congregations to whom this word may come it will of necessity mean natural rather than artificial. In some countries sixty degrees is considered quite warm enough for a room at the beginning of a service. Probably sixty-five degrees would come nearer the demands of an American audience. If a room has not been occupied for a week in cold weather it may be possible to get the temperature of sixty-five degrees, and yet, with cold seats and floors, have a very uncomfortable room for worship. People will not keep the

mind concentrated upon worship and be uncomfortable of body. A building too warm will do as much violence to worship as though it were too cold. The question of either heat or cold is minor when compared with that of the condition of the air. Multitudes of people can not understand what is the trouble with their worship. Sometimes people blame themselves for being dull, more often they blame the preacher, when in reality it is neither. A minister of any sensitiveness can not overcome the depression upon himself or the unfailing signs of the depression on his audience caused by an impure atmosphere. His own mental faculties are oppressed, and in sheer exhaustion people and preacher go from a service of worship that was meant to be an exhilaration. The country church is apt to be more at fault here than is the town or city where men are expected to be giving some attention to ventilation. If artificial ventilation is not provided, or a natural system proves

insufficient, there remains but one thing for the minister to do, and that is to superintend the only way open to him. His ushers can be instructed to open all the windows during the singing of the hymn just preceding the sermon. People standing and singing are in no danger of taking a cold. It may be said this boon will not come to a congregation by a single request for the usher to do the acts necessary. Some of the best men have proven the most careless as to the condition of the place of worship. In the construction of a church sufficient ventilation should be included so as to give an entire change of air repeatedly during the hour. Ceiling ventilators or chimneys can be depended upon if these are kept open. Twelve out of twenty congregations will not be a high proportion found by the general visitors that are suffering from the effects of ill-ventilated rooms. The one condition of retaining a janitor should be that he fulfill a contract that a church is thoroughly

ventilated before and after each service. Many janitors can not let a congregation pass the threshold of the church door before they have secured every window and door, or other place of possible ventilation.

It is not our purpose to discuss the kinds of heating apparatus used in churches. The churches reaching good results are those having the steam or hot water pipes placed in the floor. This adds to the looks of a building more than the many radiators, often seen. Where the floor is bowled the arrangement of pipes in the floor space is exceptionally successful, for it is well understood the floor can not be well heated unless the heat shall come from the lowest point. Furnace heat must be so located that the contact shall be made at the lowest point of the room. The avoidance of strong drafts has much to do with heating a building. Churches have tolerated drafts for years that were caused by the opening of doors, and never seem to have

discovered that a heavy curtain placed at the entrances, or at the rear seats, as the case might be, would obviate a large part of the difficulty. Some country churches have a double entrance at the rear, and when the door is opened a strong draft can make itself felt under the seats the entire distance across the room. This is easily and inexpensively avoided by putting a protecting board at the rear seats and under, thus relieving a difficulty.

The question of light in a church is not so easily settled as some complacently think. The windows of a church are not only for the purpose of admitting light, but have a real significance in teaching truth and making religious impressions. It is not the desire to make much of the soft and mellow light of religious worship, but to call attention to the fact that an appreciative soul will find the attitude toward divine worship heightened by a contemplation of the beautiful art works of the churches and cathedrals of the

world. The representations of Christ in art will always serve the mind and heart for good. Messages of Scripture are common in the window decoration, and the message in this unique setting will have more influence on the mind of the beholder than will the spoken word of the sermon. The question as to the designs in windows may not be amiss. A cheap figure over against a mechanical design should be decided in favor of the latter, which is not always done. The figures, if worthy as works of art, have to be selected with care as to the choosing of subjects. Is it wise to put before a worshiping congregation any other than Scriptural scenes? We doubt it. The place that must be sacredly guarded as a house of worship should not give a preference for even patriotic subjects over Scriptural. Fraternal organizations often wish to see their emblems put in conspicuous places, and thus give for memorials in the churches. It may do for State churches or cathedrals to do honor

to the nation's dead by building monuments or placing tablets in the church building, but to hold to the purpose for which our buildings are dedicated we may well declare against it. For a like purpose we object to the placing of the emblems of any order in church windows. Our chief honor in this world might be in worthily wearing one of these emblems and our mightiest task in defending the principles for which it stands, yet, withal, it shall have no place in the worship of the Lord with the undivided heart. When we see some modern skylight effects which are confidentally proclaimed as having supplanted the window, we may well listen to the pronouncement. We need have no fear that our innovations shall supplant the cathedrals of the world that have created the standard of the thousand years gone by and bid fair to stand the thousand years after our modern fancy shall have passed away. We give no attention to artificial light other than to the effects produced. A feeling

of depression not easily gotten rid of may be created on coming into a poorly-lighted room. To economize on light is to little advantage and often at great loss. The young people of a Church will not enter heartily into the service of worship in a church that is dark and dingy. To avoid creating an ill effect while the people are gathering, and in the congregational service of worship, let there be plenty of light. If there is any place where economy in the use of light can be practiced it is during the sermon. People need not be expected to take part in singing or reading if the room is so ill-lighted they are unable to see to sing or read. It is not uncommon to have the lights about the pulpit and choir so arranged that it is quite impossible to see the minister or, if looking, one becomes nearly blinded. Considerable pains will be taken to make it possible to see the face of an actor or a singer but there is a seeming forgetfulness that there is any advantage in seeing the face of the minister. It is an

unresponsive face that will not convey some meaning in the proclamation of the evangel. If the people keep their messenger in the dark they create the possibility of losing part of the message in the dark. A concealed light of good brilliancy on its own chandelier above the minister's desk will be an advantage to the minister, that he shall not do his task in the dark, and will light his face that the people may get something of the effect the message is making upon the preacher, and a beautiful piece of furniture is provided in the furnishings of the church. If the minister should be seen at night he should also be seen during the worship of the day. The high pulpit of an early day in our own history, and that of the present in many countries, may be too high, but it is at the extreme in height as our average platform is an extreme in being too low. Why a platform or pulpit shall not be made high enough for a minister to be seen in it from any part of the room is an un-

answered question. In this day, when it is almost impossible to adjust the seating of a large audience without precluding some from seeing, would it not be reasonable to raise the minister so all could see? We think so. We will add to our privilege of Church worship when we so elevate the minister that he can be seen. We have ridiculed the apparel of a larger part of our congregation long enough. Let us correct that which need not depend upon ridicule, but reason, and raise our pulpits.

American churches have the most beautiful and at the same time the most unserviceable seats in the world. Our pews are a work of art when compared to the seemingly rude benches of the cathedrals of the Old World. They are usually comfortable to sit in, and then all is said. There is an apology for a book-rack. Provision is not often made for a place to put one's hat, unless he use the floor. At the end of each pew there should be an umbrella holder with

a drip, thus making it unnecessary to hold a wet umbrella throughout a service or put it upon the floor, where little lakes are left upon the carpet. Provision should be made in seating a church for every person to keep a Bible and a hymn-book. If curved seats are used, then put the receptacle under the seat in front. One good reason our people do not have Bibles with them in worship is because there is no place to keep them. One must hold the book in hand or place it in the pew. Hymn-books are short-lived for a like want of adequate place to keep them. It is taken for granted that every committee having to select seats for a church building are intent and specific in their demands as to the needs of the congregation, but when the work is done the seats are of the stock kind, and all the conveniences are sacrificed to a particularly beautiful carved end that will stand good chances in soon revealing of what it has been made. Some churches are now leaving

out the curved pew altogether to make way for the more serviceable, if less beautiful, straight pew. In this plan the book-rack is made by putting a shelf the entire length of the pew, to the top and on the back. This shelf is placed at an angle, so that a book resting open upon it will be in good direction from the eye to read easily. This shelf is six or eight inches wide. Under the inclined shelf is the permanent place for books. It is two or three inches under the inclined shelf, and is usually left open; but in places of rented pews is often closed and furnished with a lock. The book-rest for the Bible while reading, or the hymn-book while singing, has the added value of furnishing an acceptable attitude while in prayer. Where we have neither kneeling benches nor arm-rests we have developed an indifferent attitude in our devotions, if it can be called a change of attitude at all. It comes to be very easy and natural for

the worshiper, when entering the pew, to lean forward for the essential moment of silent prayer. Any device that will lend itself naturally to an attitude of devotion for an entire congregation should be sought after. This will come as nearly to suggesting the attitude as an inanimate object can. Some churches and chapels are seated with chairs. In Birmingham, England, is a beautifully seated house of worship which has large, well-cushioned chairs, each separate from the other. Under the seat of each chair is a shelf, guarded by a lid, and here are kept the Bible and hymn-book, which are the property of the Church. The saving in cost of books in a series of years would pay all extra expenses in providing for the receptacles and conveniences.

The two pieces of furniture necessary for the observance of the celebration of the Holy Communion and the Ordinance of Baptism are the Communion Table and the Baptismal Font. There is no

object in the church that will speak with more meaning than either of the above—table or font. These are constant reminders to a congregation of the communion and confession of the Lord.

The churches that do not make provision for an organ and choir back of the pulpit can add greatly to the acoustic properties of a room by finishing the alcove as an arched sounding board. Many churches are doomed to a limited attendance because the people can not hear the minister. The echo in other churches is so marked as to confuse the message of every speaker. And in many more the shades of emotion expressed by a speaker are wholly lost upon his hearers.

The task of architects, ministers, committees, and Churches is not yet finished. It may well be wondered if we are more than just begun. The churches of other countries are built. Their conveniences are the developments of years. Our

churches are building, and our conveniences are being determined. The Church welcomes the man or manufacturer, the servant or society or the contractor or Churches that will help to find our needs, and then help supply them.

WORSHIP AND SOCIABILITY

THE social life of the Church has received unusual attention. It has been such an absorbing topic with some Churches that a reasonable question has been asked as to whether the congregation was attempting a social club or a Church of Christ. In some communities it is true that "The tea meeting draws people together as the Communion Table does not." In some congregations one can detect they are more dependent upon social power than on saving power. The highest qualification and chief recommendation to the world is in the social standing of some Churches; the fact of having some of the so-called best families in the communion or even in the self-reported glory of being the best dressed congregation in the city. How closely this theory of the mission of a Church comes to the pronouncement of Jesus in His Mission may be seen in reference to His announcement: "The

Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Real graces of Christian character are surely an asset in the extension of the Kingdom of God. The dependence upon an external application of social favors to the community on the part of the Church puts it upon a low plane even in the sight of those to whom she would make her appeal.

From without the Church comes a vigorous accusation because of a lack of sociability. Readable articles in noted periodicals have been written by those claiming to have suffered a neglect in their attendance upon the service of worship in prominent Churches. It would be hard to find a Church that has not been censured because of an inattention to strangers. In fact, the entire Church

has been put under suspicion for incivility because she has not met the requirements of her visitors. It may be well to ask what is this really important place that sociability occupies in the life of a worshiping congregation. The fact that in American Churches the free pew is common, and the most desirable seat in the building is at the service of any stranger or visitor-worshiper, is in itself a sufficient answer to the objections of the so-called neglected. Strangers are not required to stand while the congregation is being seated in their respective pews. There is no side glance that makes one feel as though he had no place in the house of God, because he chanced to get into the seat of a pew-holder. A stranger enters a church with us and is courteously shown to a pew of his own selection, and the visitor may sit with all the comforts of proprietorship. The member gives the worshiper everything he has himself in the matter of worship. What more shall we do? The whole

question as to whether the Church is a dwelling-place of God where His children assemble to worship Him or a place in which His children come, at stated times, to prattle a bit, is involved in the relation of worship and sociability. The thousands of devout worshiping Christians who refrain from breaking the impression of the spirit of worship, and marring the influence of the service upon them, until they have at least passed beyond the portals of the sanctuary, should not be held up to the imputation of coldness or carelessness by their fellow-men. The noise of complaint is never rightly proportioned to the number complaining. There are people in every community who would be more inclined to attend the worship of the Church if they knew they could get to the street without having to run a gauntlet of welcoming committees or even refusing to join one of a half-dozen societies. The worshiper looking for sociability will find it in the social services of the Church. People

do not often leave the mid-week prayer meeting feeling they have been neglected for want of attention. The numerous social activities of our modern Church life precludes any considerable cause for the Church to censure herself or stand criticism from others.

It is not a source of great inspiration to a minister, after a faithful presentation of the gospel message, to find that before he can get to the front row of hearers already the subjects of the market and politics have been taken up. There are advantages to both people and preacher in a friendly recognition before or at the close of a service of worship. The hearty laugh of the preacher that resounds through the church, which is more an exhibition of nervousness than of heartiness, does not add to the impressions of the hour. When a congregation turns itself, at the close of worship, into a conversational circle, and the individuals make themselves heard above the forte march of the big organ, there is at least

furnished an amusing spectacle to the observer from the gallery.

There are efforts of sociability which can be made effective in a service of worship. A welcoming committee may be most useful in preparing a congregation for worship. If a number of the men of a Church would find their way to the ante-rooms in time to welcome the first-comers, and would greet singly or in groups the entire congregation as it arrives, they would become a real factor in the worship of a Church. Such sociability creates a wholesome atmosphere of devotion. A committee can work with little effectiveness if the task is left for the conclusion of the service. It will detract at this time more than it will add. Probably the most serviceable as well as the best received company of men for the purpose of welcoming an audience into the place of worship is the ushers. It does not answer the need to have just enough ushers to find seats for the people. There should be enough to have men at

liberty at all entrances and at all times of the service. The graciousness of an usher is not exceeded by that of a member of the special committee. The ushers' service is not looked upon by the congregation as in any way a perfunctory duty, but is accepted as having an accredited place in Church worship. The service is often made or marred by the acts of an usher. Personal experience records eternal obligation to some ushers for their unvarying courtesy and acts of kindness in the performance of a beautiful and pleasant duty as a keeper in the House of the Lord. The attention of ushers to so-called small duties, such as the matter of ventilation by the windows, the refraining from seating tardy worshipers during prayer or reading of Scripture or special music, and the other varied courtesies of a Church service, are too well known to be emphasized and yet too often neglected.

The minister may put himself *en rapport* with the members of a congre-

gation if he have strength and disposition to meet the people as they are assembling for worship. This gives an opportunity of saying a good personal word in season and establishing a feeling of good-will before the service has begun. It does not seem the most conducive to the democracy of Christian worship to have a Church officer usher the minister into the pulpit after all the people have assembled, and usher him out at the close before any of the congregation have presumed to leave. The liberty of our American Churches is decidedly helpful to both preacher and people if due recognition is given to the time and place, and none are thoughtless.

A greater benefit in sociability than the formal greeting arises from the informal civilities of every member of the congregation. To find a hymn-book or a Bible for a stranger is a small but a real service. To hold the entrance end of a pew as though the occupant were sole owner will build a barrier between him-

self and the stranger that a handshake at the close of worship will not be strong enough to break down. Judging from all that has been said, one might conclude that men had been led to curse rather than consecrate by an attendance upon a worship where they were so hindered in vision as not to see the front of the church at all, much less the preacher. Such observation could be easily avoided on the part of those obstructing, if a little care were used in the selection of a seat.

Sociability is personality in expression. Every person may be consecrated to this task, and the pleasure he brings to others will only be equaling the delight he has in the task himself. If our interest were to go farther than the Church it were all the better. If the stranger were invited to come and share the seat with a member, and an effort made to come with him, there would be less question as to any possible neglect.

The Sunday school teachers can be-

come such consecrated personalities as shall make it possible for them to persuade their pupils to remain to the worship, to which the most of them, by a Church membership, are pledged. If parents do not look after the attendance of their children, then it is becoming for the teacher to use the opportunity. In this way the teacher becomes the governing unit of this smaller congregation, not only in the matter of discipline, but also in the attitude toward the worship as a whole, and especially toward the individual parts the congregation may have in the service. The subject of sociability can not be put into formal rules of conduct, for it is a life to be lived. The good manners of the heart should outrun the rules of the head. A worshiping congregation has in her consecrated social powers a treasure which should be used for divine ends.

WORSHIP AND THE MINISTER

IF this book had ever expected a place in Pastoral Theology the topic now to be considered would not only have been the chief chapter, but would have been the real theme of all the chapters. In an attempt to represent the "priesthood of the congregation," it will be better if the minister be given his place with the worshiping unit rather than apart from it.

As a leader the minister will have the most important part in worship. As a preacher the minister is given due consideration by the able writers and great teachers of the schools of theology. It should be insisted that the minister shall be as fully cognizant of his position as a leader of a congregation in worship, as he is a leader in thought as governed by his message in preaching.

We have nothing to do with the matter of the selection of topics that shall be considered by a preacher, or his method of treatment of the topics selected, or

even the manner of delivery, in the strict sense. We would inquire of the congregation, however, when they last heard the minister discuss the place of worship in the life of a Christian, or when were they shown the significance of the acts of worship in taking a collection or in punctuality, public praise, the use of the Bible in worship, the meaning of our church buildings, the keeping of holy days, or, in fact, any of the topics of Christian worship.

The Protestant minister has a much harder task in the matter of worship than has a Romanist or Ritualist. The minister must, with practically no ritual, fill a ritualistic service full of meaning. If he has no order of service to follow he is left with the prodigious task of making one. He is not to read prayers, but he is expected to pray with the comprehensiveness and compassionate fullness of any prayer found in a prayer book. It will not answer at all for a minister to intrude his own personal moods and ex-

periences upon a congregation while leading it in prayer. No man's experience is large enough to comprehend the experiences of an entire Church. No man's moods are to be depended upon as inditing even his own prayers, much less for a congregation with greatly varying moods. A worshiper in an anniversary service of Henry Ward Beecher noted that the minister prayed for thirty minutes. He was attempting to express the gratitude of the congregation for the years of mercy as they were passed. It was a prayer of confession into which the entire congregation was led. It was a prayer of intercession that had all men under its compassion. If a master of public address could not express the needs of a congregation in a prayer of less than thirty minutes, how shall a man of feeble speech express the need of his congregation in five minutes? He will never be able to fully accomplish his task in prayer, and that right certain if he only expresses the need of his own

soul. His need must be included, but it is not inclusive. He will never express the needs of a congregation if he has never given attention to even the items of a comprehensive prayer. It will be poor reason to claim that our prayers are given us of the Holy Ghost if we are not concerned enough to know what the Holy One would teach a praying heart. A look into a prayer-book might not nurture a man's own soul, but there is a good reason to think it would help a minister in the nurture of other souls. It will be absolutely impossible for a minister to comprehend the needs of a congregation and be their leader in the holy act of prayer unless he give himself to a most diligent and watchful study of prayer. It is not meant that he shall dissect his spiritual life and that of his people, and kill both in the process, but rather that he shall fill his own mind full of the need of his people and have "the fullness of grace upon grace" in his own heart. A minister may well sit

in thoughtfulness for a time on Saturday evening trying to fix in mind the items of need that should be recognized in his congregation. As an aid to the minister's natural equipment for this service we can do nothing better than help him to the exhortation found in the "Directory of Worship of the Presbyterian Church." "We think it necessary to observe that, although we do not approve, as is well known, of confining ministers to set or fixed forms of prayer for public worship, yet it is the indispensable duty of every minister, previous to entering upon his office, to prepare and qualify himself for this part of his duty as well as for preaching. He ought, by a thorough acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, by reading the best writers on the subject, by meditation, and by a life of communion with God in secret, to endeavor to acquire both the spirit and the gift of prayer. Not only so, but when he is to enter on particular acts of worship he should endeavor to compose his

spirit and to digest his thought for prayer."

A minister's manner in public prayer may have as much meaning as his message. It is not so much the physical attitude he may assume in prayer as it is the spiritual attitude he really has that is of great concern. His own reverence will help create a spiritual atmosphere in which another may be able, and even anxious, to pray. No member will be made devotional in the act of prayer while his minister is scolding him in the prayer. It is not a time for personalities other than in the petition of blessing. Some ministers have been known for the speed with which they could close their prayers, arise from their knees, and begin the next part of the service. A seeming or real haste destroys the devotion of a whole congregation.

The minister is an example to his congregation every time he reads the Bible in worship. His own spirit ought to follow the message read with such

relish that the congregation would eagerly run after him. If the minister knows not what he shall read, what shall it concern the congregation how he shall read it? If he can make the message too good to be true he can make the people want to see the page on which they may find the wondrous truth. Some ministers use their Bibles as though they were punching bags in the gymnasium of an athlete. "What books were those you used this morning in reading the service?" asked Garrick of an English clergyman. "Books? Why, the Bible and prayer-book!" "Ah," said the famous actor, "I observed that you handled them as though they were a ledger and day-book."

The minister brings his offering of money, sermon, praise, leadership, and prayer and worships with the congregation. Why, then, shall the minister not get as much of comfort and consolation from the hour of worship as the member of the congregation? It may be with

regret, but many ministers acknowledge the hours of public worship have nothing in them of personal reward other than that of having done a duty. Should it be so? Why shall there come to any other, more than to himself, the saving grace of a service of worship? Is it a fact that the minister has forgot to worship, but became a pure functionary by which others might worship? To the minister it has been work rather than worship.

There are many ministers who know full well their limitations as preachers. As leaders in a worshiping congregation they may be decidedly helpful, and even surpass some more spectacular servant of the platform, who is made careless, or at least indifferent, to any other item of worship than the sermon. A minister showing diligence in every act of worship becomes a true leader and will prove an increasing power in the Church. There is nothing here to permit or suggest any neglect on the part of the minister as

preacher, but rather supplementing any strength he may have as a preacher. In an effective sermon the minister receives our praise, but in an effective worship the Lord receives our gratitude. It is the minister who keeps the true ideal of the unity of worship before a congregation.

To summarize, rather than attempt the discussion of those things that have to do with a minister in the work of leading a congregation in worship, let him observe the following: Do not come into the church in breathless haste, throwing your top-coat over the chancel rail or your hat under the pulpit chair. Your composure will be needed to help some who have really been made to hurry. If you will refrain from talking with a visiting minister while another is leading in prayer, or reading the Scriptures, or the congregation is singing, it will help the people refrain from visiting in the pews. If you gaze about unconcerned only while you are vocalizing

your audience will not be concerned when you do speak. If you get up to look over your Bible or sermon while a solo is being sung, the chances are the soloist will look over the music while you preach. Help the people listen to you by avoiding such mannerisms as of necessity take attention from the message. If you yawn in the pulpit the people will likely sleep in the pew. If you constantly suppress your feeling the people are apt to suppress your facts. If the minister stands squarely on the floor, and without unnecessary base, it at least suggests that as he can get himself together he will be likely to thus treat his theme. If the minister steps over the chancel rail the children will see no reason why they shall not step over the seats. The minister must be heard: if it is the fault of the church, correct it, or if it is the fault of the minister, correct him. Take the advice of Thomas à Kempis: "If you can not sing so sweetly as the

lark or the nightingale, then sing as the raven, or as the frog in the pool, who sing as God gave them; only do not raise your voice too greatly." Good sense and good taste ought to keep the minister from using jingoism in the pulpit. The people have enough of it in the six days of a week, and would be rid of such things on their Sabbath. Do not be afraid of over-using Scripture in your sermons. One of the greatest preachers of our day has sustained himself for over forty years in one pulpit, with an increasing devotion on the part of his Church, and he uses as much Scripture in one sermon as most ministers in a half-dozen sermons.

The minister is most serviceable to a congregation when he is the most capable in the service of worship of helping the individual lose himself in the prayer, praise, profession, confession, and communal possession of the congregation in worship. Then the unit of worship is

realizing the ideal of historical and spiritual worship. The aim of Christianity is individualistic, but it does not stop until it finds its highest expression in a worship that is truly collective.

WORSHIP AND KEEPING SPECIAL DAYS

A CONGREGATION that shows interest and takes a willing part in the worship of the special days of the Church finds great gain. The special days of recognition in worship may be named as the Holy Communion, Service of Baptism, Christmas Day and Sunday nearest it, Easter Sunday, Children's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Sunday nearest it, Education Day, Memorial Sunday, and Mothers' Day.

In the celebration of the Holy Communion the Church has its most universally kept act of worship. "This do in remembrance of Me" has made its appeal to the devout Christian of every land and of every name. Dr. Denney, in the "Death of Christ," expresses the conviction of those to whom the Holy Communion means most: "One almost despairs of saying anything about the Lord's Supper which will not seem invalid to some upon critical or more general grounds." Some kind of a ritual

service, formal or informal, is used by the congregation. The essential features of all the Churches in this sacrament are taken from that first Supper of the Lord. The preparation of the room and the emblems are duly looked after by those appointed. We have no example of an Eucharistic prayer recorded as having been left by the Lord. The prayers are thus left with the various Churches or the celebrating minister. The actual breaking of bread and taking a cup is in some way recognized in every service.

To hold to the thesis of this discussion that it is "the priesthood of the congregation" that must be the determining factor in all worship, so here the congregation must accept its part in a holy service, which, as an act of noble and devotional worship, is not excelled. That service of a non-liturgical Church which seems best adapted to the expression of the congregational ideal of worship in the Holy Communion is found in the usage of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

As a form for study, if not for use, it is included here. While the minister is reading one or more of a list of selected Scripture sentences, the persons who are appointed for the purpose shall receive the alms for the poor. The people sing a Communion hymn, and when finished remain standing while the minister gives the following invitation: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

"Wherefore ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in His holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort; and, devoutly kneeling, make your humble confession to Almighty God."

The suggestion of the Church is that

the general confession, which follows, is to be made by the minister in the name of all those who are minded to receive the Holy Communion, but a more effective service, and also a more correct service, is expressed if the congregation retain its position as ministering priest and the individuals, each for himself, make the confession with the minister, and say: "Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men, we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against Thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christs' sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter

serve and please Thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of Thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." The Amen may be said or sung effectively. The minister then shall say: "Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who of Thy great mercy hast promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto Thee, have mercy upon us; pardon and deliver us from all our sins; confirm and strengthen us in all goodness; and bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." The Collect should be said by the people: "Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy name through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." This is followed by the words of the minister, who says: "We do not presume to come to this Thy table, O merciful

Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy table. But Thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood, that we may live and grow thereby; and that, being washed through His most precious blood, we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us. Amen." The prayer of consecration offered by the minister is as follows: "Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who of Thy tender mercy didst give Thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by His oblation of Himself, once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in His holy gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of His precious death until His

coming again: hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech Thee, and grant that we, receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine, according to Thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion, may be partakers of His most blessed body and blood; who, in the same night that He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat; this is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.

"Likewise after supper He took the cup; and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins; do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of Me. Amen." After the ministers have received the bread and wine there shall be said: "It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty that

we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God." The choir and congregation can effectively sing the Sanctus: "Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of Heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious name, evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high! Amen." The minister proceeds to administer the Communion to the people, and after all are finished, the congregation say or chant with the minister the Lord's Prayer, which is followed by the effective words of the minister: "O Lord our Heavenly Father, we Thy humble servants desire Thy Fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching Thee to grant that, by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His blood, we and Thy

whole Church may obtain forgiveness of our sins, and all other benefits of His passion. And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee; humbly beseeching Thee that all we who are partakers of this Holy Communion may be filled with Thy grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto Thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto Thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. Amen." Then should the congregation sing Gloria in Excelsis: "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men! we praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy

great glory, O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty!

"O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesus Christ: O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen." The service closes with the Apostolic Benediction. We have given this service because it has in it as much or more than any other service for the people. The minister has in the ritual perhaps a half more than is allotted to the people, but so large a part is given the people, if they were properly instructed and had a will to do what in the test of experience proves the most helpful to all, the Communion

services could be made as they ought to be, the most helpful, spiritual, and longed-for service of worship in the Churches.

We do not presume to speak upon the preliminary service to the celebration of the Holy Communion. This varies in the different Churches. That a special preparation service should be held previous to the celebration of the Holy Communion is undoubted. The Church should not be permitted to rush into the participation of this holy service unprepared either as the larger factor in celebration or in the more limited capacity of receiving.

The administration of Baptism to either adults or children may well be used as a special day in the worship of the Church. It is to be hoped it might be necessary to make it of frequent occurrence, but it at least, so far as possible, should have its public appeal and instruction. In the baptism of a child the minister has an opportunity of calling to the mind of all parents their most

holy and sacred duty. No congregation will become too well instructed in the obligation as well as the nature of the Sacrament. An invitation to every unconverted man rests in the right observance of the Sacrament of Baptism administered to an adult. For these reasons, and others, a service of baptism may well be considered a special occasion in the worship of a Church.

It is recognized by the Churches more and more that Christmas Day should be observed in a service of special worship in the Churches. As a barrier against an encroachment upon the sacredness of the day it is well for the Churches to turn the attention of the people of a community to the spiritual significance of the day. An early morning service of praise and thanksgiving, a service at the time of regular worship, or a vesper service in an appropriate hour can be used effectively. It is a custom to be commended that gives a Christmas Sunday service to the community. That

Church which puts before its people and the community the varied approaches to a Christian life and character may well expect to see the returning fruits of such endeavor.

Easter Sunday is generally observed by the Christian world. Too often, however, is the observance in slight keeping with the meaning of the day. Many Churches seem satisfied to let a children's service or Sunday school concert take the place of the regular worship of the Easter morning. A concert has its distinct place, and there are hours when, with great propriety and profit, the Church may give itself to worship in this way; but the time is not on an Easter Sunday morning. If the minister has any duty or privilege of a large nature it may well be considered as centering in the message he brings his people on the Easter Sunday. A prominent and devoted layman relates his experience in going to the service on an Easter Sunday morning, and the chagrin and disap-

pointment he felt when his minister announced his theme of "Civic Righteousness." No man in the city was more concerned than this man in civic righteousness, but he had, in common with the Christian world, a great longing to hear of the things that give the greatest confidence to our Christian faith. Thus oftentimes a children's service is made to take the place of that message which is above every other message calculated to form the basis of faith. A most successful service for children has been conducted in at least one Church on Easter Sunday afternoon. This service is the established and recognized Sunday for decision on the part of the young for a Christian life. Children are brought for baptism and adults are invited. It makes a sane, sacred, and saving service.

Children's Day is appropriately associated in some Churches with education. The educational societies furnish programs which are informing and usually inspiring. Many Churches have no par-

ticular plan in view in keeping the day other than to have a service in which the children take part. When there is no object in view or clearly defined purpose in the service it is the tendency to let it drift into a sort of exhibition and lose the thought as well as the spirit of worship. It is not to the advantage of the Church to indulge its children in a species of private theatricals in the Church. Halls and chapels connected with the church may be used for purposes which are not in keeping with the sanctuary of worship, and a time that should be guardedly held for worship.

A minister of prominence had as his custom for the observance of Thanksgiving Sunday the preaching of a sermon. He joined in the usual Thanksgiving services of the Churches, but on the Sunday nearest the day he held his Church Thanksgiving Service. In this message, which was usually illustrated by a great world map, he would undertake to show the congregation the world progress of

the year for which any people should be thankful, and especially a Christian people. The day is also used for the purpose of calling attention of the Church to its own progress, locally or world-wide, and the greatest opportunity for a consideration of the progress of the Church in the world is offered. A real missionary sermon that has the viewpoint of gratitude instead of gold is the outcome.

The educational Sunday referred to is not that used by the Educational Boards of the various Churches, but rather the Sunday connected with the high school and college Commencements. The annual sermon is observed in many communities, and the general topic of education is worthy a service of worship. Besides the personal opportunity of an appeal to the young life, it has a farther significance in calling attention to the thoroughly Christian character of the schools, as illustrated in the character of the teaching force of the land, the proportion of the graduates from Christian

homes, and the Christian character of the teaching of our day.

Memorial Sunday has the appeal for patriotism that the Educational Sunday has for education. The Church has great gain in the observance of the day, for she honors herself in the honor she pays to our patriot dead. The time may not be far removed when the Church will institute another memorial service—the day when she will recognize the soldier of piety on the plains of peace as now she recognizes the soldier of patriotism on the fields of war.

WORSHIP AND THE ORDER OF SERVICE

THE Churches have in general a recognized order of services. In many of them the order is indifferently followed. It is more a suggested than a prescribed order. There are many Churches where the word is a misapplied term. There is no order. The minister and congregation are to sing, pray, read a lesson, and listen to a sermon. In many other Churches, and those of the more pretentious order, there is an attempt made to introduce novelty into the service. Simplicity of service may be a virtue, and to many minds it will be the most appropriate. We must bear in mind that progress in Christian character must be attained, and only that service that lends itself as an aid to such development shall be accepted as the desirable. The service that has the element of simplicity expressed in the terms of limitation is not to be sought after. The simpler the service, that has in it all the elements of necessity, the better.

The introduction of novelties of worship will be made at the expense of the essentials of worship.

An order of service common to all Protestant Churches would be of real advantage to the worship of the present. The difficulties are apparent in these days, when it is no uncommon thing for ministers of different denominations to exchange for a service of worship, or the still more common participation in union services. It is also recognized as a difficulty for a minister to go to various Churches of his own denomination and know what will be really expected from him as to a service. Sometimes he is limited to a twenty or thirty minute opening service, and again the prescribed form of opening worship will continue for fifty minutes. The service may not suffer from this indefiniteness of time, but a minister often suffers a limitation upon his message which is not overcome by his willingness to conform to the requirements. Where there is a Church officer whose business it

is to furnish a visiting minister an intelligent idea of the requirements of the service the difficulties in part may be obviated.

It remains a question as to whether the various Churches will ever come to the use of a common order of worship, but there is no question as to the necessary items of worship in all the Churches. The order may vary, but the need is continuous.

Keeping in view the idea of the congregation as the worshiping unit, the following items may be suggested as necessary in a worship that will have in it the possibility and the probability of development of the spiritual life and Christian character of the congregation.

Introduction

The introduction of a service of worship is not the slight matter we are apt to make it. A minister is heard announce as his opening words of worship, "Sing one-twenty-six." A man has no more liberty in a pulpit than out of it. He is

rightfully expected to make a complete and intelligible sentence here as though he were in a schoolroom. Why not say, "Let us worship God," or "Let us pray," or "Let us worship by the use of hymn or Psalm number twenty-six?" If there is objection to opening worship with a hymn, then a short prayer of invocation may be offered. It is suggested by some that appropriate verses of Scripture should be used as the first words of worship. We ought to let our Heavenly Father speak to us before we presume to speak in His presence. "Thus saith the Lord" has more compelling power than any words of man. It would require but little effort on the part of the minister to find appropriate Scripture verses for the services of a year. The Bible lends itself very readily to such messages as,

How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts!

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they
will be still praising Thee.
Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee:
In whose heart are the highways to Zion.
—Psa. 84.

It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,
And to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most
High:
To show forth Thy lovingkindness in the morn-
ing,
And Thy faithfulness every night.—Psa. 92.

O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good:
For His mercy endureth forever.—Psa. 118.

If the Invocation prayer is used instead of the hymn or Scriptures, it finds an illustration in the following Scripture verses, which are an example in brevity, inclusiveness, and spirit:

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in His holy place?
He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;
Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity,
And hath not sworn deceitfully.
He shall receive a blessing from the Lord,
And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy
lovingkindness;
According to the multitude of Thy tender mer-
cies blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,
And cleanse me from my sin.
Create in me a clean heart, O God:
And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence;
And take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

The Apostles' Creed

The Apostles' Creed recited by all the people while standing is of common use. In confession a man must stand alone, but in the Creed he stands with every believer in the Christian religion. There has been some discussion as to where the Creed may be most helpfully used in the service of worship. Calvin put it in his Liturgy at the close of the worship. If we are to think of the cumulative effect of worship on a congregation this would be the proper place. It is being swept on from penitence to confession, and then to confidence: it is

going from prayer to praise and from a communion to a climax in the Creed of the apostles and elders, and all who have found favor with God. On the other hand, the Creed is likely considered as the utterance on the part of each worshiper of his own personal faith which he is addressing to God. It is the latter, rather than a proclamation of that faith to God. If it is considered then as a personal faith expressed in a communal act, it may well be placed at the beginning of man's worship rather than at the close.

Prayer

In the worship by prayer the minister has his most difficult task. If he were only expected to express his own need the task would not be so great. To comprehend and adequately express the needs and aspirations of an audience is well nigh impossible. His prayer, in some form, must express a confession of sins. It may do to think of the inclusive-

ness of sin and let a sentence pass for the whole matter of confession, but the difficulty lies in the fact that in such a prayer the individual will not make confession. We confess in the concrete. Man sins against God. He attempts to live without God, is ignorant of God, unfaithful to Him. We have not love or zeal or joy, as we know we should have. We are impatient and often insincere. We lack reverence as well as righteousness. We have need not only to confess our sin in the abstract, but also our sins against our fellow-men. We have been angry with them, careless of them, and indifferent to them. The members of households have not been in harmony for the week; parents have not done their duty with children, and children have forgotten to regard their parents. People have been hurt in feeling and in reputation. Men have not only sinned by commission, but more by omission. It is not only what we have done, but what we have n't done that we

should be reminded of. A congregation is not to be left to rest in its indifference when it should be led to confess for its idleness. We sin against the gospel, against our Christianity and the Church. Every practice and privilege of life puts us under such obligation as necessitates a real confession from us. A man who is most sensitive to Christ is most serious in his confession.

The prayer of petition is well nigh unlimited as applied to a congregation. If a man does lack in confession, he is not apt to be lacking in petition, if his heart is once opened. Man will respond to the things he is made to feel he needs. Man knows his need of guidance, but the chances are it will not be a matter of consideration in his worship if he is not reminded of it. The Holy Spirit will be but a term of abstraction to him unless he be led into the presence of the Holy One. The need of help, faith, patience, and power will be recognized as a supreme need if suggested; but, per-

chance, it will not be an item of thought if none bring it to him. He hardly dares presume upon grace to bring him cleansing, and if promises are not pleaded he may well despair. To make effective either confession or petition it will be needful that promises of vital relation shall be expressed in the hearing of the people. Where does man find anything comparable to the expression of confidence as given in the psalm? Man would know what the love of God means, and listens as he is told:

Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him:
I will set him on high, because he hath known My name
He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble:
I will deliver him, and honor him.
With long life will I satisfy him,
And show him My salvation.

Some prayers are so taken up with confession and petition there is little, if any, expression of adoration and thanks-

giving. If a congregation can be made to feel a small part of the blessings which are theirs, and then will enter into the gratitude that is becoming, there will be a service of great inspiration.

The prayer of intercession is too often omitted from the services of the American Churches. If we believe that "The powers that be are ordained of God," we will not omit the prayer of intercession for those in authority. The prayer for all men of all classes, of all work, of all lands, of all business, of all worship, of all sorrows, or of all joys, should not be omitted.

The repetition of the Lord's Prayer by minister and people is followed in many Churches. Often it concludes the prayer of the morning, being repeated audibly by the people. The choir and congregation chanting the Lord's Prayer as a conclusion to the evening prayer is often helpfully used. The more general the people join in either reciting or singing the Lord's Prayer, the more certain

will be the influence for good upon the entire worshiping body. With some of the better musical arrangements there is no difficulty in an audience taking its part.

Praise

The arrangement of hymns and anthem will follow the usual order of a hymn, at the opening or at least following Scripture sentences or the prayer of invocation. A hymn precedes the sermon, and usually follows. The anthem will usually come immediately after the prayer. As the praise service has been considered as to its parts and importance, the only thing remaining to be said is that it shall have the participation of the whole audience whenever practicable.

Announcements

The announcements in a service of public worship usually have an effect upon the worshiper as something incon-

gruous to the rest of the worship. The work of a Church should have due notice, and in many Churches there seems to be no way of gaining for the work of the Church this publicity other than in the announcements from the pulpit.

Where a bulletin can be issued, the public announcement can, in part, be obviated. It is usually necessary, even where a bulletin is in the hands of the people, to either make some additional announcements or emphasize those given. It is not, however, necessary for any minister to greatly extend the giving of notices, as is commonly done. A clear statement, and the people should understand there will be little, if any, repetition, and they will give attention. The announcement of the offering is given with others, and the offering should be received at the close of the announcement. It is scarcely necessary, with the right idea of the offering, to expect the sermon shall influence the giver or dispose him to liberality.

The Sermon

From the opening voluntary, through each item of worship to the sermon there should be a cumulative effect of worship and devotion produced which should have an effect upon both preacher and people, and at the announcement of a text there should be the best preparation for a thoughtful and prayerful consideration of the truth presented.

Closing Service

The service after the sermon is usually a short prayer for a blessing upon the message. In some Churches an opportunity to unite with the Church is given after the announcement of the closing hymn. The benediction to which one may listen in many Churches is an anomaly. The Apostolic Benediction is probably the more common. One noted minister would say, "Let us receive the Apostolic Benediction." "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of

God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." Sometimes the Aaronic Benediction is appropriately used: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Short benedictions are: "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

* * * *

As clear a statement of the acceptable worship of God as has been left the Churches is that contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith:

"I. The acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will that He may not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.

"Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and to Him alone; not to angels, saints, or any other creature: and, since the Fall, not without a Mediator; nor in the mediation of any other, but in Christ alone.

"Prayer, with Thanksgiving, being one special part of religious worship, is by God required of all men: and, that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the name of the Son, by the help of His Spirit, according to His will with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance; and, if vocal, in a known tongue.

"The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear; the sound preaching, and conscionable hearing of the Word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith, and reverence; singing of Psalms with grace in the heart; as also the due administration and worthy receiving the sacraments instituted by Christ; are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God."

"II. God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in any thing contrary to His Word, or beside it, in matters of faith and worship."

"III. The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's

salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelation of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word; and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed."

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